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Kings and Usurpers in the Seleukid Empire

The Men who would be King

Boris Chrubasik



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BORIS CHRUBASIK

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Preface

When is a king a king? This question, and the question of kingship in the Seleukid empire in particular, is the topic of this book. Instead of examining kings, this study investigates the history of usurpers, individuals who wished to be king, and who at times were successful but to whom history or historiography, for differing reasons, ascribed other roles. In this regard this book is a political history of Seleukid power and regions such as Asia Minor, the Levant, Mesopotamia, and the Upper Satrapies. Yet with its focus on Seleukid counter-kings, the image of the Seleukid empire that is offered here is quite different to that of recent historiography. I detail my approach and methodology in the introduction, but in all brevity, this is a book that describes the Seleukid state beyond the diplomatic lens, and examines relationships of social power. These varying levels of power are discussed in the first four chapters, which in return serve as the basis for a new reading of kingship in the Seleukid empire in the final chapter.

In the process of writing this book I have accrued debts to so many individuals that some might question whether I did anything myself. This book began its life as a doctoral thesis, and as a mentor and supervisor John Ma not only always encouraged me in my work, but also let me go my own way, waiting in the background until I needed his advice. Studying with John was a marvellous adventure, but I have had the privilege to learn also from many others about historical approaches, and how to ask historical questions. Charles Crowther, Ulrich Gotter, Jürgen Osterhammel, and Kai Trampedach were the most influential in this regard. When the thesis was completed, Katherine Clarke and Stephen Mitchell acted as generous examiners, and Ivana Savalli-Lestrade offered important insights in her careful review when it was proposed to the publisher. Stephen Mitchell further offered kind support with the transformation from thesis to monograph. Many more colleagues, mentors, and friends were involved at various stages, some mentioned here, others throughout the text: Robert Bennett, Matthew Bladen, Angelos Chaniotis, Ben Gray, Robin Lane Fox, Will Mack, Julien Monerie, Robert Parker, Christian Seebacher, and Peter Thonemann made valuable comments on individual chapters at various stages (some

even on the whole manuscript). Aneurin Ellis-Evans, Kyle Erickson, Richard Flower, Johannes Geisthardt, Merav Haklai, Wolfgang Havener, Claire Holleran, Konstantin Klein, Jane Masségia, Andy Meadows, Mario Paganini, Bert Smith, Foteini Spingou, Kathryn Stevens, and Ben Watson gave their time to discuss individual questions, and helped me to avoid mistakes. Needless to say, all of these individuals may not at all times agree with the material presented here, and mistakes are entirely my own. I am grateful to institutions for help regarding coins and for various image rights, the ANS, the BM, the Staatliche Münzsammlung München, the Archäologisches Museum der Universität Münster, Cambridge University Press, *Vestnik drevnej istorii*, and to many people who made this possible: Amelia Dowler, Arthur Houghton, Dietrich Klose, Helge Nieswandt, Elena Stolyarik, and Askold Ivantchik. I must also thank Michael Athanson from the Bodleian for his work on the maps, Jeffrey Easton for his invaluable support and a keen eye towards the end of the process, and I am grateful to Charlotte Loveridge and Georgina Leighton from OUP for making the book.

The initial doctoral thesis was funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council and the Studienstiftung des deutschen Volkes. Parts of this book were written while I was a Leventis Research Fellow in Exeter, and I am very grateful for the time this position gave me. The departments of Historical Studies and Classics at the University of Toronto were generous in giving me time to finish this work. Elizabeth Ferguson supported me in all aspects within and beyond the subject of Seleukid usurpers, and surely she now knows more than she ever cared to about both the Seleukid empire, and my very individual prose style; I cannot thank her enough. Widmen möchte ich dieses Buch meinen Eltern und meinem Sohn. Ohne die Liebe und unermüdliche Unterstützung meiner Eltern wäre dieses Projekt nie begonnen worden, ohne die Ankunft unseres Sohnes noch nicht vollendet.

Boris Chrubasik

Toronto

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List of Abbreviations

All citations of classical authors and biblical texts follow the standard abbreviations in *Brill's New Pauly*, or are easily recognizable. All abbreviations of journals follow *L'année philologique* and otherwise *Brill's New Pauly*. The abbreviations of journals and series not mentioned in them are listed here. All abbreviations of papyri follow the guidelines of Oates, John F., Bagnall, Roger S., Clackson, Sarah J., et al., *Checklist of Greek, Latin, Demotic and Coptic Papyri, Ostraca and Tablets*.¹

AD	II: Sachs, Abraham J. and Hunger, Hermann (1988), <i>Astronomical Diaries and Related Texts from Babylonia: Vol. II</i> , Vienna. III: Sachs, Abraham J. and Hunger, Hermann (1996), <i>Astronomical Diaries and Related Texts from Babylonia: Vol. III: Diaries from 164 B.C. to 61 B.C.</i> , Vienna. VI: Hunger, Hermann (2006), <i>Astronomical Diaries and Related Texts from Babylonia: Vol. VI: Goal Year Texts</i> , Vienna.
<i>AchHist</i>	Achaemenid History
<i>Amyzon</i>	Robert, Louis and Robert, Jeanne (1983), <i>Fouilles d'Amyzon en Carie</i> , Paris.
ANS	American Numismatic Society
ANSNM	American Numismatic Society: Numismatic Notes and Monographs
Bab.	Babylonian Version of Dareios' Rock Inscription at Bisotun
<i>BCHP</i>	Finkel, Irving and Spek, Robartus van der (in preparation), <i>Babylonian Chronicles of the Hellenistic Period</i> . Preliminary versions of the texts available at http://www.livius.org/cg-cm/chronicles/chron00.html 26 April 2016.

¹ <http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/papyrus/texts/clist.html>, Month, 200# (accessed 22 April 2016).

BE	Bulletin Épigraphique in <i>Revue des Études Grecques</i> (referred to by year and lemma number).
BM	The British Museum
BMC Greek and Scythic Kings	Gardner, Percy (1886), <i>The Coins of the Greek and Scythic Kings of Bactria and India in the British Museum</i> , London.
BMC Mysia	Wroth, Warwick (1892), <i>Catalogue of the Greek Coins of Mysia</i> , London.
BMC Parthia	Wroth, Warwick (1903), <i>Catalogue of the Coins of Parthia</i> , London.
BMC Pontus	Wroth, Warwick (1889), <i>Catalogue of Greek Coins: Pontus, Paphlagonia, Bithynia, and the Kingdom of the Bosphorus</i> , London.
BMC Seleucids	Gardner, Percy (1878), <i>Catalogue of Greek Coins: The Seleucid Kings of Syria</i> , London.
Brodersen, BAA	Brodersen, Kai (1991), <i>Appians Antiochike (Syriake 1,1–44,232). Text und Kommentar nebst einem Anhang: Plethons Syriake-Exzerpt</i> , Munich.
Brodersen, BAS	Brodersen, Kai (1989), <i>Appians Abriss der Seleukidengeschichte (Syriake 45,232–70,369). Text und Kommentar</i> , Munich.
CH	Coin Hoards
CM	Glassner, Jean-Jacques (2004), <i>Mesopotamian Chronicles</i> , ed. and trans. Foster, Benjamin R., Atlanta, GA.
CSE	I: Houghton, Arthur (1983), <i>Coins of the Seleucid Empire from the Collection of Arthur Houghton</i> , New York. II: Hoover, Oliver D. (2007), <i>Coins of the Seleucid Empire from the Collection of Arthur Houghton, Part II</i> , New York.
DB	The Old Persian Text of Dareios' Rock Inscription at Bisotun.
ESM	Newell, Edward T. (1938), <i>The Coinage of the Eastern Seleucid Mints: From Seleucus I to Antiochos III</i> , New York.
EK	Edelstein, Ludwig, Kidd, Ian G. (1972–99), <i>Posidonius</i> , 3 Vols, Cambridge.
F. Delphes	<i>Fouilles de Delphes, III: Épigraphie</i> , 6 Fasc, Paris. III.1: Bourguet, Émile (1929), <i>De l'entrée du sanctuaire au trésor des Athéniens</i> , Paris.

- FGrHist* Jacoby, Felix (1923–62), *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*, Berlin and Leiden.
- Hilprecht and Clay *BE* 9 Hilprecht, Hermann V. and Clay, Albert T. (1898), *The Babylonian Expedition of the University of Pennsylvania, Series A: Cuneiform Texts. Volume IX. Business Documents of Murashû Sons of Nippur*, Philadelphia.
- I.Délos* *Inscriptions de Délos*, 7 Vols, Paris.
V: Durrbach, Félix and Roussel, Pierre (1935), Nos. 1400–1496, Paris.
VI: Roussel, Pierre and Launey, Marcel (1937), Nos. 1497–2219, Paris.
- I.d'Iran et d'Asie centrale* Rougement, George (2012), *Inscriptions grecques d'Iran et d'Asie centrale*, Corpus Inscriptionum Iranicarum II. 1. I, London.
- I.Didyma* Rehm, Albert (1958), *Didyma II. Die Inschriften*, Berlin.
- I.Erythrai* Engelmann, Helmut and Merkelbach, Reinhold (1972–3), *Die Inschriften von Erythrai und Klazomenai*, IK 1–2, 2 Vols, Bonn.
- I.Estremo Oriente* Canali De Rossi, Filippo (2004), *Iscrizioni dello Estremo Oriente Greco: un repertorio*, IK 65, Bonn.
- IG* *Inscriptiones Graecae*
- IGBulg²* *Inscriptiones Graecae in Bulgaria repertae*
I: Mihailov, G. (1970), *Inscriptiones orae Ponti Euxini*, 2nd edition, Sofia.
- IGCH* Thompson, Margaret, Mørkholm, Otto, and Kraay, Colin M. (1973), *An Inventory of Greek Coin Hoards*, New York.
- IGRR* Cagnat, R. et al. (1906–27), *Inscriptiones Graecae ad res Romanas pertinentes*, Paris.
- I.Iasos* Blümel, Wolfgang (1985), *Die Inschriften von Iasos*, IK 28. 1–2, 2 Vols, Bonn.
- I.Ilion* Frisch, Peter (1975), *Die Inschriften von Ilion*, IK 3, Bonn.
- IK* *Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien*
- I.Kyme* Engelmann, Helmut (1976), *Die Inschriften von Kyme*, IK 5, Bonn.
- I.Labraunda* Crampa, Jonas (1969–72), *The Greek Inscriptions, Labraunda: Swedish Excavation and Researches III*, 2 Vols, Lund and Stockholm.

<i>I.Laodikeia</i>	Corsten, Thomas (1997), <i>Die Inschriften von Laodikeia am Lykos</i> , IK 49, Bonn.
<i>I.Magnesia</i>	Kern, Otto (1900), <i>Die Inschriften von Magnesia am Maeander</i> , Berlin.
<i>I.Milet</i>	Rehm, Albert (1914), <i>Milet, III. Das Delphinion in Milet</i> , (nos. 31–186), Berlin. Hermann, Peter (1997–2006), <i>Milet VI. Die Inschriften von Milet</i> , (nos. 187–1580), 3 Vols, Berlin.
<i>I.Pergamon</i>	Fränkel, Max (1890), <i>Die Inschriften von Pergamon: 1. Bis zum Ende der Königszeit</i> , Berlin.
<i>I.Priene</i> ²	Blümel, Wolfgang and Merkelbach, Reinhold in Verbindung mit Frank Rumscheid (2014), <i>Inschriften von Priene</i> , IK 69, Bonn.
<i>I.Smyrna</i>	Petzl, Georg (1982–90), <i>Die Inschriften von Smyrna</i> , IK 23–4, 3 Vols, Bonn.
<i>I.Tralleis</i>	Poljakov, Fjodor B. (1989), <i>Die Inschriften von Tralleis und Nysa</i> , IK 36, Bonn.
JSHRZ	Jüdische Schriften aus hellenistisch-römischer Zeit
LBAT	Pinches, Theophilus G. and Strassmaier, Johann N. (1955), <i>Late Babylonian Astronomical and Related Texts</i> , Providence, RI.
LGPN	Matthews, Elaine, Fraser, Peter M., Catling, Richard W.V. et al. (1987–), <i>A Lexicon of Greek Personal Names</i> , Oxford.
<i>Mauerbauinschriften</i>	Maier, Franz G. (1959), <i>Griechische Mauerbauinschriften</i> , 2 Vols, Munich.
NABU	<i>Notes assyriologiques brèves et utilitaires</i>
NCBT	Newell Collections of Babylonian Tablets
NNÅ	<i>Nordisk Numismatisk Årsskrift</i>
OGIS	Dittenberger, Wilhelm (1903–5), <i>Orientalis Graecae Inscriptiones Selectae</i> , 2 Vols, Leipzig.
PCG	Austin, Colin and Kassel, Rudolf (1983–2001), <i>Poeti Comici Graeci</i> , 8 Vols, Berlin.
RC	Welles, Charles B. (1934), <i>Royal Correspondence in the Hellenistic Period: A Study in Greek Epigraphy</i> , London.
Robert, OMS	Robert, Louis (1969–90), <i>Opera Minora Selecta: epigraphie et antiquités grecques</i> , 7 Vols, Amsterdam.

- SC I: Houghton, Arthur and Lorber, Catharine C. (2002), *Seleucid Coins: A Comprehensive Catalogue, Part I: Seleucus I to Antiochus III*, 2 Vols, New York/Lancaster, PA.
 II: Houghton, Arthur, Lorber, Catharine C., and Hoover, Oliver D. (2008), *Seleucid Coins: A Comprehensive Catalogue, Part II: Seleucus IV to Antiochus XIII*, 2 Vols, New York/Lancaster, PA.
- SE Seleukid Era
- SEG Chaniotis, Angelos, Corsten, Thomas, et al. (1923–), *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*, Leiden.
- SNG *Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum*
- SNG Cop.Epirus Anon. (1943), *Sylloge Nummorum Graecarum: The Royal Collection of Coins and Medals in the Danish National Museum: Epirus-Acarnania*, Copenhagen.
- SNG Cop.Mace III: Anon. (1943), *Sylloge Nummorum Graecarum: The Royal Collection of Coins and Medals in the Danish National Museum: Macedonia, Part III, Philip III–Philip VI; Macedonia under the Romans; Kings of Paeonia*, Copenhagen.
- Svoronos Svoronos, Ioannes N. (1901–8), *Τὰ νομίσματα τοῦ κράτους τῶν Πτολεμαίων*, 4 Vols, Athens.
- Syll.³ Dittenberger, Wilhelm (1915–24), *Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum*, 3rd edition (by F. Hiller von Gaertringen), 4 Vols, Leipzig.
- TADAE I: Porten, Bezalel and Yardeni, Ada (1986), *Textbook of Aramaic Documents from Ancient Egypt: Letters*, Jerusalem.
- TAM *Tituli Asiae Minoris*
 II: Kalinka, Ernst (1920–30), *Tituli Lyciae linguis Graeca et Latina conscripti*, Vienna.
 V: Herrmann, Peter (1981–9), *Tituli Lydiae linguis Graeca et Latina*, 2 Vols, Vienna.
- Urk. II. Sethe, Kurt (1904–16), *Hieroglyphische Urkunden der griechisch-römischen Zeit*, 1–3: *Urkunden des Aegyptischen Altertums*, begr. v. G. Steindorff, Abt, II, Leipzig.

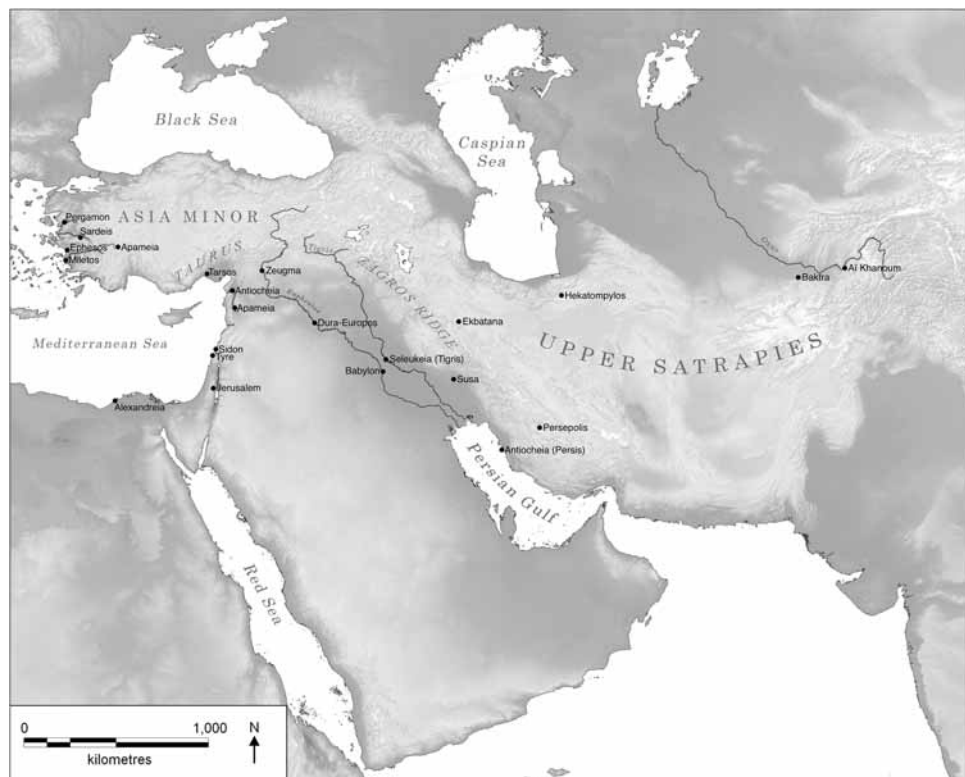
Walbank, *HCP*Walbank, Frank W. (1957–79), *A Historical Commentary on Polybius*, 3 Vols, Oxford.

WSM

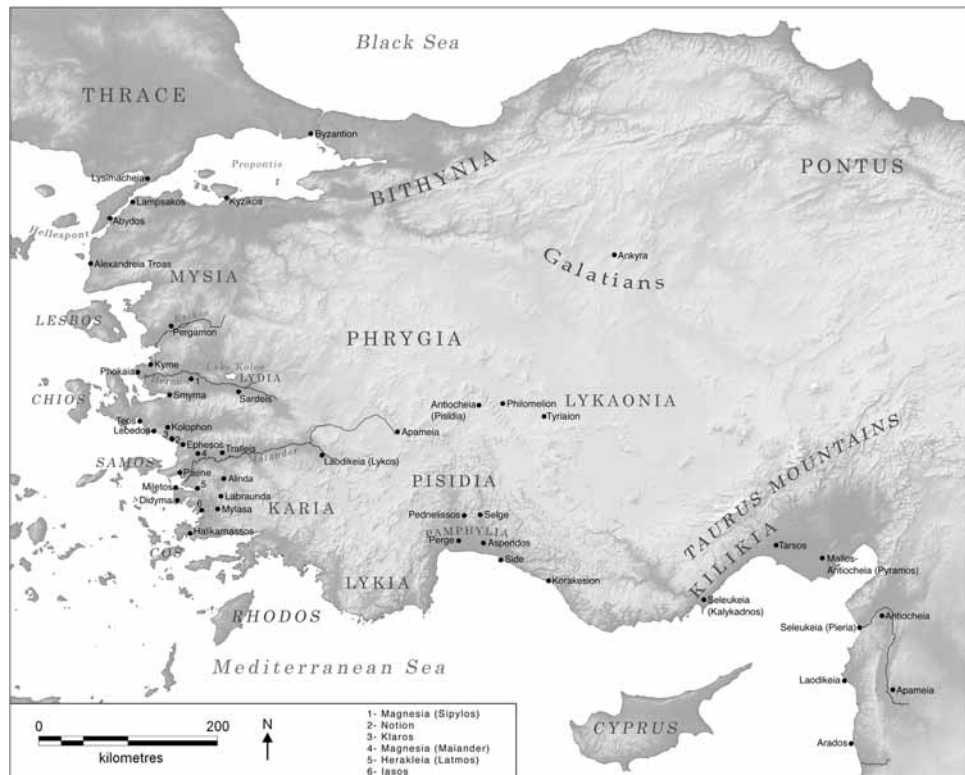
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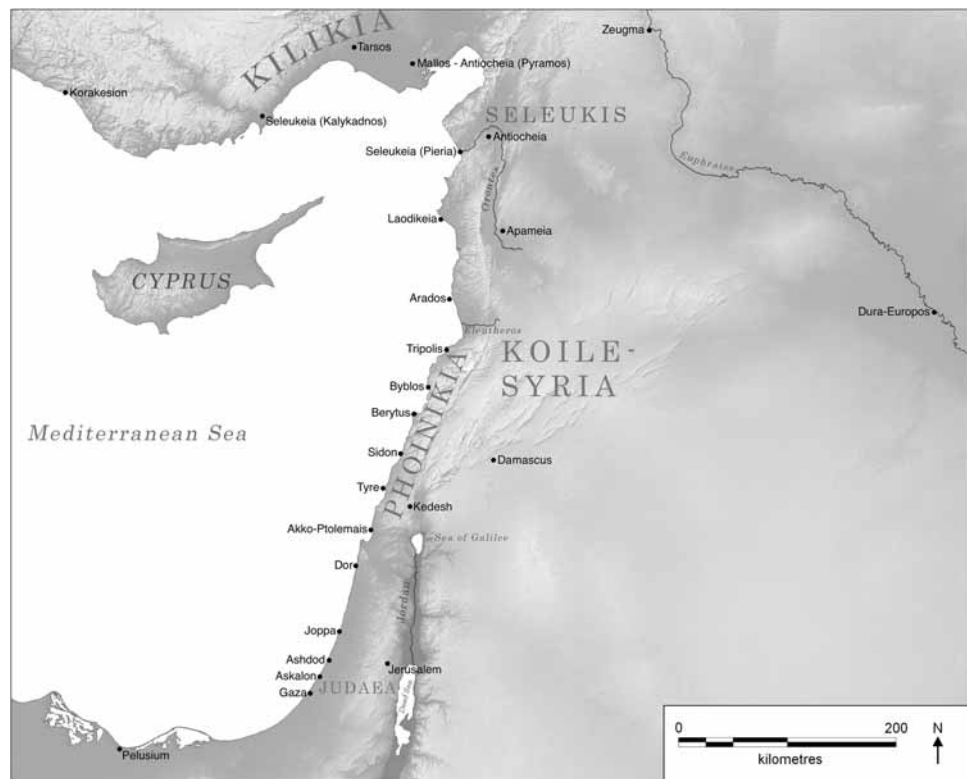
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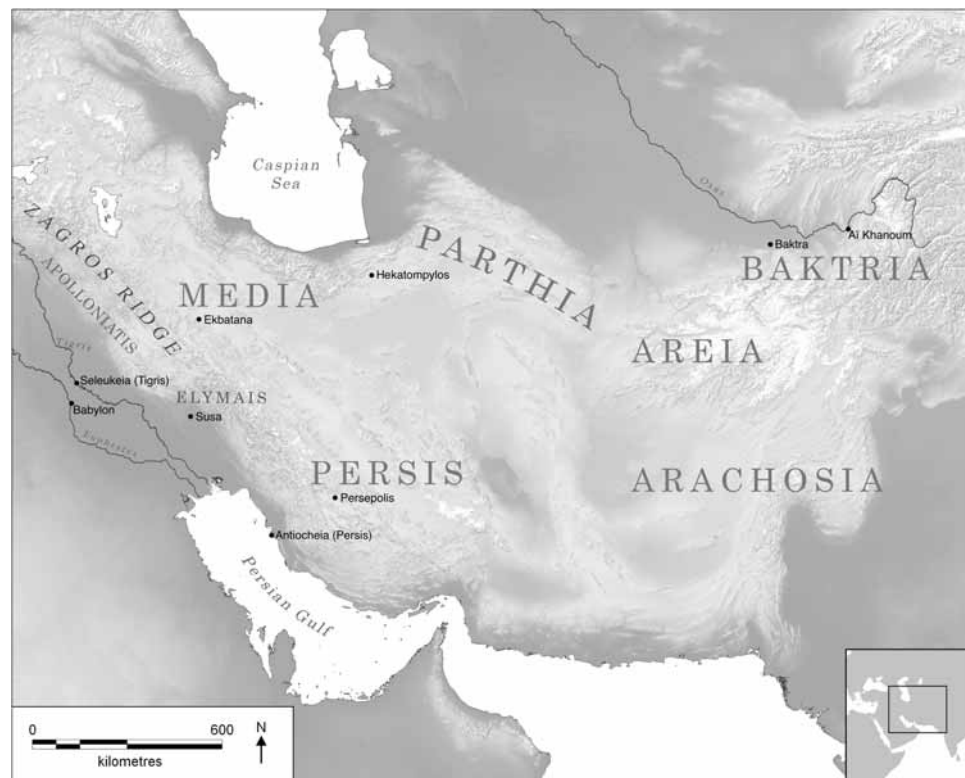
Map i The Hellenistic East. Copyright of author.



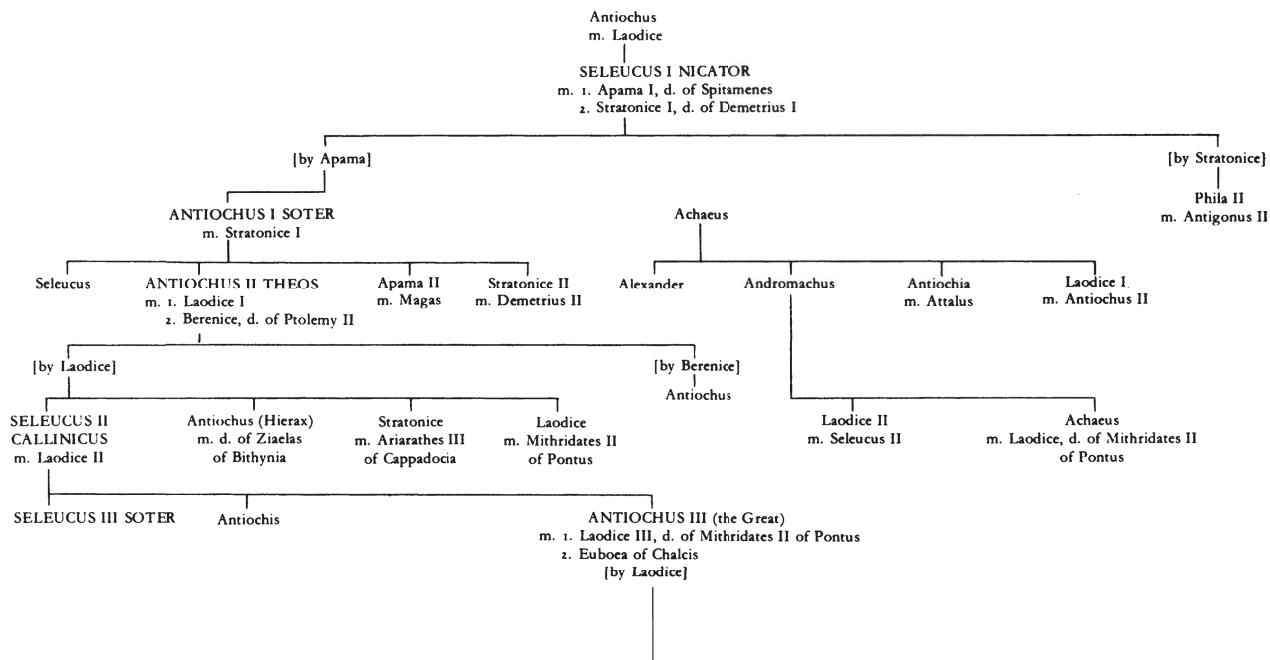
Map ii Asia Minor. Copyright of author.



Map iii The Levant. Copyright of author.



Map iv The Eastern Satrapies. Copyright of author.



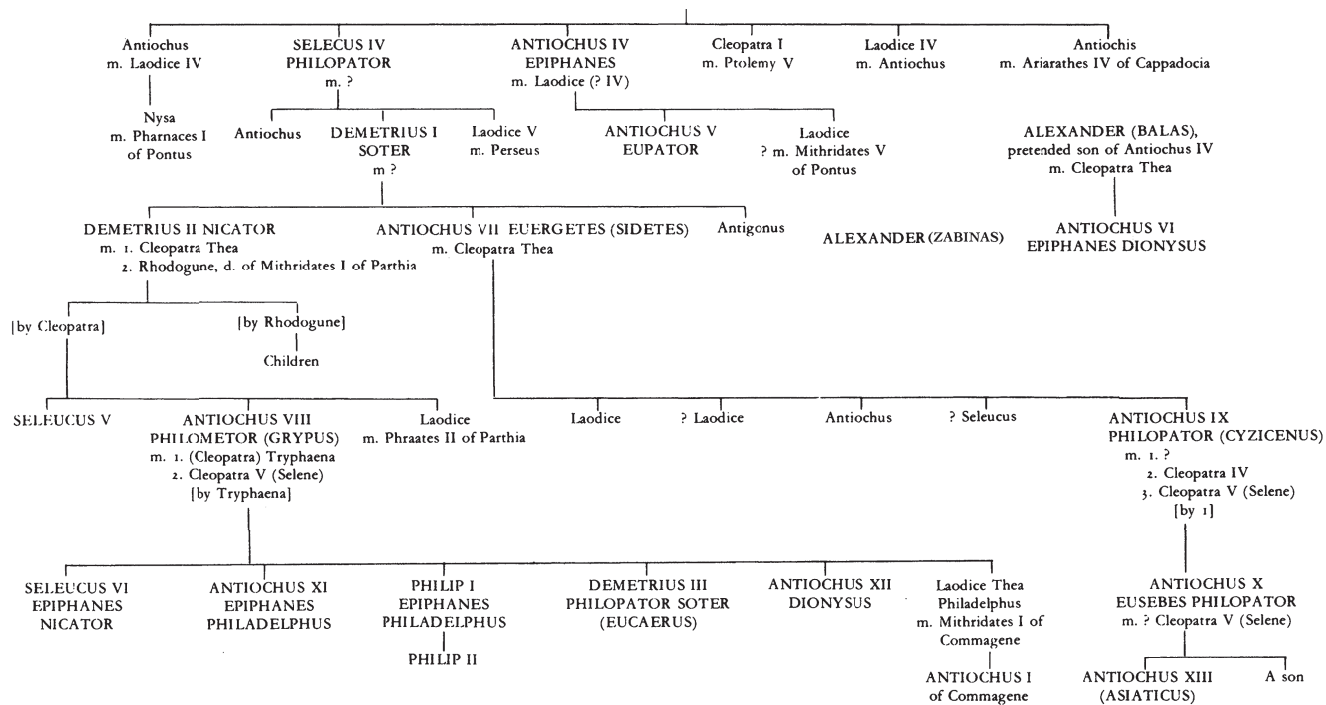


Fig. i The House of Seleukos. *CAH*² 7.1, 490–1; modified. From F. W. Walbank, A. E. Astin, M. W. Frederiksen, R. M. Ogilvie (eds), *The Cambridge Ancient History*, Edition 2, Vol 7, Part 1 (1984). Copyright of Cambridge University Press.

Introduction

Eleganter enim et ueraciter Alexandro illi Magno quidam comprehensus pirata respondit. Nam cum idem rex hominem interrogaret, quid ei videretur, ut mare haberet infestum, ille libera contumacia: Quod tibi, inquit, ut orbem terrarum; sed quia <id> ego exiguo navigio facio, latro vocor; quia tu magna classe, imperator.

A certain captured pirate replied rather elegantly and accurately to Alexander the Great. For when the king asked him why it seemed good to him that he kept the sea infested, he replied with free stubbornness: 'For the same reason that you do this to the land. But because I do it with my small boat I am called a pirate; because you do it with a great fleet, you are called an emperor.'

Aug. Civ. 4. 4.

'We are not little men, and there is nothing that we are afraid of except Drink, and we have signed a Contract on that. *Therefore*, we are going away to be Kings.' 'Kings in our own right,' muttered Dravot.

R. Kipling, *The Man who would be King*, p. 252.

0.1 PROLOGUE: THE DEATH OF A KING

In his account of a battle in 220 BCE¹ between two Hellenistic armies west of the mighty Zagros ridge in the southern district of Apollonia in Babylonia, the Hellenistic historian Polybios recorded the following event:

Molon aware of what had happened and already surrounded on every side, haunted by the tortures he would suffer if he were taken alive, put

¹ All dates, unless otherwise stated, are BCE.

an end to his life, and all who had taken part in the plot escaped each to his home and perished in a like manner. Neolaos, escaping from the battle to his brother Alexander in Persia, killed his mother and afterwards himself, persuading Alexander to follow his example.²

What had happened? King Molon had been *φοβερός*, ‘formidable’ (Pol. 5. 43. 8). He was a high power-holder in the Seleukid kingdom who had declared himself king in 222, the year of the Seleukid king Antiochos III’s accession. He had crossed from Media into Babylonia, and had taken control of the former Seleukid territories with relative ease (Pol. 5. 48. 10–16). He won more than one battle against the armies that the Seleukid king had sent to the East, and he minted his own coinage with his own royal portrait with energetic curls (a reference to Alexander the Great) and the precious diadem. The reverses of his coins were—as many others were in the ancient world—marked as his own issues, and labelled with the legend *βασιλεὺς Μόλων*, King Molon, in the genitive (SC 950). When Antiochos III marched against him with an enormous force and encountered Molon’s army in an open battle, Molon’s troops, which relied on the numbers of slingers (Pol. 5. 52. 5), defected and *μετεβάλετο πρὸς τοὺς πολεμίους*, ‘went over to the enemy’ (Pol. 5. 54. 1). The Seleukid king commanded that Molon’s dead body be impaled in the most conspicuous place in Media (Pol. 5. 54. 6). After further administrative changes, punishments, and pardons, Molon’s rebellion (ἡ *Μόλωνος ἀπόστασις*) was put down (Pol. 5. 54. 13).

0.2 A HISTORY OF KINGS AND USURPERS

Molon’s revolt is a story about the politics of the Hellenistic world, and of the Seleukid kingdom in particular. It is the story about a king and his high-powered friends, cities, local communities, secession, and war. It is also a story about usurpation, that is, the act of an

² Pol. 5. 54. 3–5: ὁ δὲ Μόλων συννοήσας τὸ γεγονός καὶ πανταχόθεν ἤδη κυκλοῦμενος, λαβὼν πρὸ ὀφθαλμῶν τὰς ἐσομένας περὶ αὐτὸν αἰκίας, ἐὰν ὑποχείριος γένηται καὶ ζωγρία ληφθῇ, προσήνεγκε τὰς χεῖρας ἑαυτῷ. παραπλησίως δὲ καὶ πάντες οἱ κοινωήσαντες τῆς ἐπιβολῆς, φυγόντες εἰς τοὺς οἰκείους ἕκαστοι τόπους, τὴν αὐτὴν ἐποιήσαντο τοῦ βίου καταστροφὴν. ὁ δὲ Νεόλαος, ἀποφυγὼν ἐκ τῆς μάχης καὶ παραγενόμενος εἰς τὴν Περσίδα πρὸς Ἀλέξανδρον τὸν τοῦ Μόλωνος ἀδελφόν, τὴν μὲν μητέρα καὶ τὰ τοῦ Μόλωνος τέκνα κατέσφαξε, μετὰ δὲ τὸν τούτων θάνατον ἐπικατέσφαξεν αὐτόν, πείσας τὸ παραπλήσιον ποιῆσαι καὶ τὸν Ἀλέξανδρον.

individual apparently wrongfully occupying the sovereign position within the state. From the perspective of a royal history of Seleukid kings, the rulers of the largest of the successor kingdoms of Alexander the Great, Molon had revolted. But this was not the only usurpation in the Seleukid empire, far from it. The first attested usurpation occurred in the middle of the third century when Antiochos Hierax, the brother of the reigning Seleukos II, declared himself king in Seleukid Asia Minor.³ More usurpers would follow after Molon's revolt: a certain Achaïos appeared in the year of Molon's death, and Timarchos, Alexander Balas, Tryphon, and Alexander Zabinas followed in the second century.⁴ It is these usurpers who form the central focus of this book, and it is argued that an analysis of usurpation, that is, of a state in disorder, allows us to characterize the history of power in the Seleukid kingdom from a different, more interesting, and perhaps more appropriate angle, and demonstrates the fragility of kingship within the Seleukid state.

Research on the Hellenistic world, and on the Seleukid empire as one aspect of it, has flourished over the last twenty years.⁵ Studies have focused particularly on foreign policy and on specific geographic areas.⁶ Current scholarly approaches to the period can be classified in four partially overlapping groups according to the type of documentary evidence they take into account, and to the methodology they apply. First, the work of L. and J. Robert above all has inspired a specific focus on epigraphic documents (mainly from Asia Minor),

³ On the reasons why Ptolemaios Keraunos has not been included among Seleukid usurpers, see later in this section.

⁴ The Seleukid high power-holders Heliodor under Seleukos IV (App. Syr. 45 [233]), Philip under Antiochos IV (1 Makk. 6. 14–17; 2 Makk. 13. 23), and Herakleion under Antiochos VIII (Jos. Ant. 13. 365) might fall under the same category. Given the limited evidence for their political activities, however, they will not form individual topics in this study.

⁵ Neither a bibliographical essay, nor an overview of works on the Seleukid state, this section illustrates different directions in current Seleukid research that have influenced this work. The direction of the 'grand' studies on Seleukid history, such as Will 1979; Will 1982; Bickerman 1938; Habicht 1989b; Holleaux 1942b; Robert and Robert 1983; Rostovtzeff 1941; and Schmitt 1964, will be apparent throughout. For recent monographs: Honigman 2014; Kosmin 2014; Monerie 2014; Plischke 2014; and Strootman 2014.

⁶ For two different angles on Antiochos III and Rome: Dreyer 2007; Grainger 2002. On the Syrian Wars: Grainger 2010. Regional studies: Wiemer 2002 on Rhodes (not part of the Seleukid empire, but part of the world of Asia Minor). On northern Asia Minor: Michels 2009. On the Upper Satrapies: Plischke 2014. On the Levant: Sartre 2001. On Judaea: Honigman 2014.

and has encouraged major thematic studies on the interaction between the Seleukid king and groups within his kingdom; on the discourse of Seleukid language; on institutions such as the Seleukid *philoï*; and communities in Seleukid Asia Minor. This approach has been stimulated by numerous new epigraphic discoveries in Turkey, and lately in Israel.⁷

Seleukid numismatics forms a second strand in current research and also owes much to the pioneering work of L. Robert as well as groundbreaking studies by H. Seyrig, E. Newell, and later O. Mørkholm and G. Le Rider.⁸ These modern Seleukid numismatic studies underpinned the publication of comprehensive catalogues (a remarkable achievement in their own right), and a new generation of research focusing on mints, hoards, and thematic studies.⁹ In the same way as the studies on Asia Minor have forged a new approach to Seleukid history through epigraphic evidence, numismatics are now fully exploited to rewrite the histories of the regions of the Hellenistic eastern Mediterranean and central Asia; regions that were at times integral parts of the Seleukid empire as well as regions on the fringes and beyond. Recent studies on the Baktrian rulers, Seleukid successors, and contemporaries in central Asia are one prominent example.¹⁰

⁷ The work of the Roberts is too wide-ranging to cite here, yet Robert and Robert 1954 as well as Robert and Robert 1983 can serve as exemplaries on method and approach. On the discourse of Seleukid power: Ma 2002. On kings and groups within the kingdom: Dignas 2002; Mileta 2008. On the *philoï*: Savalli-Lestrade 1998. Villages: Schuler 1998. Important recent documents: e.g. Knoepfler 2010 on the Ionian *koinon*; SEG 58: 1220 (*ed. pr.* Isager and Karlsson 2008) for honours for Olympichos at Labraunda; SEG 47: 1745 on the granting of *polis* status at Phrygian Toriaion, with Thonemann 2013. The Olympiodoros dossier from Tel Maresha in Israel (SEG 57: 1838), *ed. pr.* Cotton and Wörle 2007 (read with Gera 2009 and Jones 2009) is the most important recent find. A second copy of the text—also from Tel Maresha—has now been identified and is currently being prepared for publication. I am grateful to Gerald Finkielsztejn (Israel Antiquities Authority) for this information.

⁸ e.g. Seyrig 1950; Seyrig 1986; Newell: *ESM* and *WSM*; Le Rider 1965; Le Rider 1999; Le Rider and de Callatay 2006; Mørkholm 1963; Mørkholm 1991.

⁹ The Seleukid coin catalogues: SC, building on *ESM* and *WSM*. Note, however, also the important publications of CSE. Studies on specific mints or hoards: Davesne and Le Rider 1989; Duyrat 2005 on Arados; Hoover 2007 on Tyros; Le Rider 1998 on Seleukeia on the Tigris; Le Rider 1999 on Antiocheia on the Orontes. Le Rider's study is to be supplemented by a study of the second-century mint by Houghton and Hoover forthcoming. Thematic studies: e.g. Lorber and Iossif 2009 on Seleukid beards; Meadows 2009 on Pamphylian coinage. See also recent doctoral theses on Seleukid coinage: Erickson 2009 on deities; Dodd 2009 on political imagery.

¹⁰ The second-century Seleukid empire, with a focus on the Levant, is discussed by Mittag 2006 and Ehling 2008, both published before the completion of SC. For other

The third strand falls into the domain of Late Assyriology. Scholars working on the documentary material from Mesopotamia not only demonstrate a high level of sophistication in the edition of these sources, but also increasingly historical reconstructions are written explicitly through these documents. The publication of important corpora, such as the *Astronomical Diaries*, and the wider dispersion of the Babylonian documents from the Hellenistic period have cast a spotlight on the remarkable contributions of Assyriologists and historians of Mesopotamia to Seleukid studies.¹¹ It is now impossible to do Seleukid history without consideration of the Babylonian material. Surely, it is not only a temporal connection that this third strand has become more and more visible at a time when also a new methodological approach to the Seleukid empire has entered the scene.

The approach of *how* to study the history of the Seleukid empire has shifted significantly in the last twenty years. The important revisionist study of S. Sherwin-White and A. Kuhrt, which places emphasis on understanding the Seleukid kings as rulers of a Near Eastern empire, has fostered a new approach in Seleukid studies that examines the relationship between the Achaimenids and their Macedonian successors. P. Briant, A. Kuhrt, H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg, and S. Sherwin-White have not only emphasized the continuity of Achaimenid elements within the Seleukid state, but also have stressed the resurgence of Babylonian culture under Seleukid rule.¹² Moreover, in contrast to the previous view of the Seleukid kingdom as the ‘sick man of Asia’, the methodological shift to ‘new Seleukid history’ has created an image of a strong and vital Seleukid empire.¹³ This view

Seleukid regions such as the Persis: D. Engels 2013; Curtis 2010; Klose and Müsseler 2008 in a dialogue with Wiesehöfer 1994 and Wiesehöfer 2011 (affirmed by Plischke 2014: 310–11). For a catalogue of Elymaian coinage: Haaff 2007. On Baktria: Coloru 2009; Holt 1999; Kritt 2001; see also the catalogue by Bopearachchi 1991. For a monetary history in the former Seleukid regions of Attalid Asia Minor: Callataj 2013 and Meadows 2013a.

¹¹ On the *Astronomical Diaries*: AD, with van der Spek 1997–8, and Geller and Traina 2013. On Babylonian chronicles: Finkel and van der Spek on <http://www.livius.org/cg-cm/chronicles/chron00.html> [accessed 7 April 2015]. On writing history with the Babylonian material, see e.g. Boiy 2004; Boiy 2007; Clancier 2011; Clancier 2012; Monerie 2012; Clancier and Monerie 2014; Clancier forthcoming.

¹² Kuhrt and Sherwin-White 1987; Kuhrt and Sherwin-White 1993; reactions in *Topoi* 4.2. 1994; Briant 1990.

¹³ The extreme of ‘new Seleukid history’ can perhaps be seen in Petrie 2002, where the author’s assembled evidence clearly demonstrates the influence of Greek culture on the local community of Uruk, while the introduction and conclusion of the study

has been embraced and qualified in the last decade by the thematic studies of G. Aperghis, L. Capdetrey, and P. Kosmin, who focus on the administration, the economy, and the ideology of the Seleukid state.¹⁴ With its emphasis on the eastern parts of the empire, this dominant approach encourages a more thorough examination of the archaeology of the eastern Seleukid empire,¹⁵ and in fact one could easily argue that the increased awareness of documentary material from the Hellenistic East, and from Hellenistic Babylonia in particular, is one of the great methodological shifts brought forward by 'new Seleukid history'.

This book is indebted to, and inspired by, these modern contributions to Seleukid history, and in particular by the interest in documentary studies. It represents a thematic study of a political system—single rule, kingship—and it analyses it through the phenomenon of usurpation. I was motivated by the ubiquity and vitality of usurpers in the third- and second-century Seleukid space, and it is through the lens of usurpers that this study analyses the literary and documentary evidence of the Seleukid empire. While usurpation was not confined to the Seleukid kingdom, the frequency of the phenomenon within Seleukid territories allows us to draw conclusions that go beyond explaining individual rebellions, and in order to remain meaningful to the Seleukid empire, this study will focus on the Seleukid usurpers alone.¹⁶ For example, if we place the above passage on *Molon* in a

vehemently argue for the vitality of Babylonian culture. For the 'sick man of Asia': e.g. Will 1979; Musti 1984; Wolski 1999.

¹⁴ Recent studies on the administration and economy of the empire: Aperghis 2004; Capdetrey 2007; Ramsey 2009; D. Engels 2011 and D. Engels 2014a. On Seleukid ideology: Kosmin 2014.

¹⁵ R. van der Spek's revision of most Seleukid articles in the fourth edition of the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* perhaps most aptly demonstrates the dominance of 'new Seleukid history'. For 'Seleukid' and Near Eastern archaeology: e.g. Potts 2012; Potts 2010; Hannestad 2013; Hannestad 2011; Invernizzi 2004; Mairs 2014.

¹⁶ In a way, usurpations within the Antigonid sphere were indeed just that, individual revolts. On the usurpation of Alexander Kraterou: Knoepfler 2001: 287–95 (with further literature). Also, the nature of revolts within Ptolemaic Egypt, beyond usurping family members, has a different quality. For example, the attempts of the rebel kings to outbid the Ptolemies by being more Pharaonic than them also emphasizes differentiation and competition between these kings and the Ptolemies (and differentiation is a crucial element of this study), but reference to a higher authority (i.e. previous 'legitimate' pharaohs) is foreign to the Seleukid empire: see e.g. Vèisse 2004: 83–99. The case of Dionysios Petosorapis, chiefly recorded in Diod. Sic. 31. 15a, however, demonstrates similar pressures: Vèisse 2004: 99–112. For the name: Clarysse 2009.

political framework of Seleukid kings, it is a story of revolt in a Hellenistic kingdom under one particular ruler. Within this framework, the reasons for Molon's revolt have at times been interpreted as the result of degenerated individuals, and thus a sign of a weakness in the kingdom,¹⁷ or—not altogether different—in the framework of a strong Seleukid kingdom, as an episodic weakness in the form of a young, inexperienced king.¹⁸ While the explanation that degenerate individuals were bred by despotic courts is not only un-analytical, and—in this case—follows a colonial *topos* of 'oriental' despotism, in its approach this method nevertheless has an advantage over episodic explanations: for Bevan the underlying reason for secession was the nature of the court,¹⁹ and it is the quest for a structural explanation that is advantageous. Episodic explanations ignore, and cannot account for, the continual appearance of usurpers over a period of roughly 120 years.

If we shift our analysis from a purely dynastic and political perspective to a sociological framework, the questions that should be asked become more transparent. H.-J. Gehrke has argued that Hellenistic kingship can be analysed using M. Weber's theory of charismatic rule.²⁰ Indeed, the persuasiveness of Gehrke's interpretation is apparent in an abundance of examples; Attalos I's claim to kingship after the defeat of the Galatians at the source of the river Kaikos (Pol. 18. 41. 7) is only one of them. Moreover, victories could not only make individuals worthy of kingship, but also they could make kings worthy of their diadem; Polybios' often quoted characterization of Antiochos III after his return from the east is the most striking example. Polybios stresses the implications of the success of the king for the eastern as well as the western parts of his empire by writing, 'for it was through this expedition that he seemed

¹⁷ e.g. Bevan 1902: I 301. One should note that Bevan is only following the explanation given in Pol. 5. 41. 1–3. Yet Hermeias' malice in Polybios' narrative fits Bevan's view of 'Oriental' courts.

¹⁸ This seems to be implied in Kuhrt and Sherwin-White 1993: 188–9. Also, 'schlechte Personalpolitik', as argued by Plischke 2014: 331, is episodic and cannot be an explanation.

¹⁹ Bevan 1902: I 301.

²⁰ Gehrke 1982 now re-published in English: Gehrke 2013. For other studies on Hellenistic kingship: e.g. M. M. Austin 1986; Walbank 1984b; Virgilio 2003: esp. 47–85.

worthy of the kingship not only by those in Asia, but also by those in Europe'.²¹

Here, however, further refinement is required since this approach also illustrates the limits of the use of charisma. M. Weber argues that no power or ruler could exert successful and stable rule without the subject's interest and acceptance in being ruled as well as their belief in the ruler's legitimacy; brute force was not stable in the long run.²² Thus, a king was not worthy of kingship because he was successful in his attempts which ascribed him charisma, rather he needed an audience that judged these successes to be valid.²³ The second (third, fourth, etc.) actor needs to be introduced at this stage. These actors were the audiences of royal performance as well as the agents of their own actions. What difference would Attalos I's acclamation in the Kaikos valley have made if nobody had cheered? The king's success was dependent on successfully communicating his achievements. He had to be persuasive through 'royal offers', a dialogue between ruler and ruled, which had to be understood and accepted by both agents involved, thus creating the 'social magic' that established order.²⁴ J. Ma has illustrated that it was the communication between claimants to the kingship on the coast of the Levant and the Makkabees that could *make* usurpers kings, and his analysis of royal documents underlines that it was the acceptance of the kings' offers which made *a* king *the* king.²⁵ However, Gehrke's use of charisma underlines that a king's communication with his subjects was based not on royal utterances alone, but also on other forms of discourse. Polybios alludes to this in his description of the military victories of Antiochos III's campaign as a display of success. Antiochos III's show of royal military prowess or luxury (royal performance in other words) did not immediately 'create' charisma which in turn made him accepted as a ruler, as implied by M. Weber.

²¹ Pol. 11. 34. 16: διὰ γὰρ ταύτης τῆς στρατείας ἄξιός ἐφάνε τῆς βασιλείας οὐ μόνον τοῖς κατὰ τὴν Ἀσίαν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς κατὰ τὴν Εὐρώπην.

²² M. Weber 1980: 122.

²³ For similar questions with different agents, see Ando 2000: e.g. p. 5 and mainly chs 5–7.

²⁴ Habermas 1987: 371–97 and 427–35 stresses the necessity of consensus for political decision-making, and the distortion in uneven relationships. The relationship between two agents and the question of how 'social magic' could be created has been treated by Bourdieu 1991: 42; applied by: Veyne 1990; Flaig 1992.

²⁵ Ma 2000b.

Rather, analogous to the king's use of language and public pronouncements, royal success and luxury initiated non-verbal discourses which stressed the rulers' interest in the acceptance by the groups within the kingdom.²⁶ According to Polybios' narrative, the Seleukid king had performed as a king should, and his audiences, by accepting the message, not only acknowledged but also created his royal status.

I will argue in this book that the Seleukid king was not *legitimate* in a dynastic sense; rather in social terms he was *accepted*. Military victories and descent from former successful kings were critically important elements that could enhance the possibility of rulers' acceptance. Through descent Seleukid princes could become kings while they were still children.²⁷ Dynasty, however, was not a guarantee: 'dynastic' kings could also lose their kingship, and become unaccepted and rejected.²⁸ The role of Molon and that of other usurpers is best explained from this perspective. The Seleukid king was not the only power-holder in the Seleukid kingdom, he was only the biggest player. For example, the king's *philoi*, and the king's close friends in particular, fulfilled important roles in the administration of the empire, and thus obtained powerful positions as military commanders and benefactors,²⁹ who were powerful enough to rival the king. Molon's revolt should be interpreted as a social phenomenon. He had been a friend of the former Seleukid kings, and had persuaded his troops to follow him. For them he was their king since he had defeated an enemy, and had conquered a large part of Mesopotamia. If viewed from this perspective, the performance of this particular usurper does not look very different from that of the Seleukid kings, and other usurpers' actions likewise can be interpreted in a similar way. In consequence, the Seleukid usurpers will provide us with information about kingship in the Seleukid empire, and the Seleukid rulers themselves.

²⁶ e.g. Alexander 2006: 29–90, esp. 29–37; Fischer-Lichte 2003: 37–41.

²⁷ See also Walbank 1984b: 66–7.

²⁸ e.g. Seleukos III (Pol. 4. 48. 6–9); see ch. 2.1c; Demetrios I (Jos. *Ant.* 13. 59–61); see ch. 3.1b; cf. M. M. Austin 2003: 123; Gehrke 1982: 268–9. For acceptance vs. legitimacy, see critically Flaig 1992.

²⁹ For the distinction between the circle of 'Friends'—the *philoi*—and the king's 'friends'; Ma 2011: 526–7; see also ch. 4.1a. On officials' duties and benefactions, see e.g. OGIS 235 with *Amyzon* 1 for a dedication by Zeuxis to the community of Amyzon. For the reciprocity between Seleukid officials and communities, see Ma 2002: 206–11.

This book covers a period of roughly 120 years (246–c.125 BCE), a period when usurpers confronted kings within the Seleukid empire, whose ancestors had established a royal line. The murder of Seleukos I in 281 and the kingship of Ptolemaios Keraunos are excluded because patterns of succession were still too fluid when Antiochos I became king. The period of cousin and brother warfare from the accession of Antiochos VIII until the end of the Seleukid kingdom also is not part of this study. The literary and documentary evidence for this later period is more limited than for the earlier period, and the existing material does not allow me to address the questions this book raises. The conclusions of this study of the Seleukid empire between the mid-third and the later second century call into question the influential paradigm of ‘new Seleukid history’, and the model of a ‘strong Seleukid empire’.³⁰ The study of Seleukid usurpers indicates that although the Seleukid kingdom was a dynamic and vital force over a period of more than two centuries, it was intrinsically different from its Achaimenid predecessor and structurally weak.

0.3 USURPATION AS AN INTERPRETATIVE MODEL

Usurpation shows a state in disorder; rules of ‘normal’ social behaviour are upturned, and an investigation of this abnormality can reveal the underlying structures of the monarchy.³¹ If usurpers wanted to compete with the Seleukid kings, they had to persuade the groups in their spheres of influence that they were the better option for the diadem. Therefore, their ‘royal offers’ to these potential subjects had to be more successful, and perhaps more visible than those of the Seleukid king. Moreover, the difference between the ‘royal offers’ of kings and usurpers provides a viable tool to assess the dynamics of power within the Seleukid kingdom. A single usurper’s attempt, such as the revolt of Molon, might be considered to be an exception, and

³⁰ e.g. Kuhrt and Sherwin-White 1993; Aperghis 2004; Capdetrey 2007.

³¹ É. Durkheim’s observation between ‘normal’ and ‘abnormal’ is still critical: Durkheim 1964: 1–9. For a summary on the perception of the work: Gane 1988. Usurpers in Rome: Flaig 1992.

thus only illustrates the potential of an individual to secede from the king (forcing us back to a dynastic framework of historical explanation). However, by comparing a sample of usurpations from different geopolitical areas, periods, and political constellations, it is possible to discern recurrent themes in the usurpers' attempts to claim the diadem. In order to make these patterns apparent, individual usurpations will be placed in a historical narrative (chs 2.1; 3.1) before being analysed (chs 2.2; 3.2; 3.3). The examination of usurpers' strategies to take the diadem provides a fresh way to understanding the power structures of the Seleukid kingdom (chs 4 and 5).

0.3a Talking about Usurpers and the Choice of Words

In the sociological framework described above, there is little difference between Molon's claims to the diadem and those of the Seleukid king. However, for this proposition to be acceptable, it is necessary to give methodological consideration to the language that is used to describe usurpers and usurpation. The term 'usurper' is always negative. It describes an individual who has obtained a position of supreme power and authority without just cause, and therefore this description comes as part of a cultural-political package. The terminology assumes there is a judging authority that can differentiate between (to use a neutral term) a 'power-holder', who had an army and claimed some territory 'rightfully', and another individual who revolted and usurped power; in other words, the term 'usurper' contains a cultural judgement between right and wrong, widely accepted within the society that subscribes to it.³² This argument presupposes a dynastic model for the Seleukid kingdom, and this is only natural since our sources follow a Seleukid narrative (see ch. 0.3b). Molon was labelled a usurper by the Seleukid king (e.g. Pol. 5. 41. 6) since he had been defeated. In the normative narrative of Seleukid (court) history his rule was translated into an act of usurpation and ἀπόστασις, 'revolt' (Pol. 5. 54. 13). Two further examples illustrate this narrative pattern: in c.162 Demetrios I, a son of Seleukos IV,

³² See Foucault 1988–90: I 17–35, here 31–2. Foucault's description of a day labourer, first integrated into the community, then expelled when his (previously accepted) behaviour is reinterpreted as a crime, is a comparative case study for labelling; cf. Gutting 2005 and Rouse 2005 for an introduction to Foucault's approach and its perception.

landed on the coast of the Levant, executed Antiochos V, the son of Antiochos IV, and ruled until he was killed in battle by the armies of Alexander Balas (1 Makk. 10. 50; Jos. *Ant.* 13. 61). Around 152, Alexander Balas himself, perhaps a son of Antiochos IV, landed on the Levantine coast, defeated Demetrios I in battle and executed the members of the royal court. He remained king until he was defeated by Demetrios II and Ptolemaios VI, and was murdered by his *philoi* (Diod. Sic. 32. 9d, 10. 1).³³ If we set aside the language of Seleukid royal discourse, it is far from obvious how we should discriminate between legitimate kings and usurpers. Both Demetrios I and Alexander Balas had led troops in the Seleukid kingdom, and had persuaded the groups in the kingdom that they were worthy and acceptable kings; both were eventually challenged, defeated, and met violent deaths. Who should be called a usurper: both or neither? The critical reader might attribute these difficulties to the uncertain political predicament of the second century BCE. However, I will argue that it was not the political situation of the second century that created the terminological dilemma sketched here. If we disengage the label ‘usurpers’ from the cultural context of an official narrative of the Seleukid empire, the term simply becomes inapplicable. In order to understand the sociology of power in the Seleukid kingdom, it is necessary to establish whether kings were accepted or rejected, not whether the term ‘usurper’ was applied to them by rival contenders.

It is helpful, however, not to be too strict with terminology. When comparing the actions of any given Seleukid king and contender for the diadem, labelling the latter as a ‘usurper’ avoids confusion, particularly because these individuals are familiar to scholars in this guise. I prefer, therefore, to use the common term in a descriptive way (without its cultural baggage) and not to create a ‘neutral’, seemingly unmarked term. Therefore all canonical kings (and this includes Demetrios I and Demetrios II) are described as kings, while all contenders (including Antiochos Hierax, Alexander Balas, and Alexander Zabinas) are designated as usurpers.

Moreover, at times it is difficult to distinguish between ‘dynasts’, that is, local rulers who became increasingly powerful, and ‘usurpers’. Attalos I, the ruler and later king of Pergamon who affirmed control

³³ For both, see chs 3.1b and 3.2d.

of his ancestral territories in north-western Asia Minor, is never labelled or even characterized as a rebel by Polybios (the same author who described the ‘revolts’ of Molon and Achaïos), or by other authors. Polybios’ image of the first Attalid king is well known (e.g. 18. 41), and therefore the positive image of the Attalid ruler ultimately should not be surprising. At a first glance it is nevertheless hard to explain how the actions of Attalos I differed from those of the third-century usurper Achaïos, who carved out his kingdom in Asia Minor against the interest of the Seleukid king. Both extended their own influence in the former Seleukid space of Asia Minor (for the Attalids, see ch. 1.1a). However, the difference between the two categories was not merely terminological, and one that was influenced by the survival and promotion of a positive image of the Attalid dynasty.³⁴ Two initial differences are immediately striking (fully discussed in ch. 1). The Attalids were local dynasts, power-holders over land within Seleukid authority in north-western Asia Minor, in the periphery of the empire. By seceding, they questioned Seleukid authority over the Aiolis, but did not endanger the kingship of the Seleukid king as a whole, and were thus politically acceptable. Achaïos, while acting in a space where the Seleukid king was not always present, was a Seleukid ‘high power-holder’, a friend of former kings, and at least a *philos* of the current king. He had been a member of the Seleukid court, was a member of a small elite, commander of Seleukid units, and was in charge of regions that the Seleukid king defined as politically central (Lydia, Sardes, and the royal road in Phrygia). For this reason, while Attalos I was acceptable to the Seleukid king, the disloyalty of Achaïos was dangerous, and thus he was considered a usurper. Of course the distinction between seceding dynasts and usurpers might be blurred. In periods when a king and dynast were vying for the same territories, dynasts could theoretically ‘become’ usurpers since they could pose a danger to Seleukid kings and their position, yet I contend that they are different phenomena, and the distinction will be discussed further in chapter 1.

0.3b Writing Usurpation

I have so far discussed the implications a study of usurpers entails, but how can we practically know about usurpers, and how can we write a

³⁴ On the Attalid image: Schalles 1985.

narrative of usurpers in order to adequately analyse their claims to power? The major resource when writing about usurpers in the Seleukid empire is the documentary and literary evidence. The history of usurpers is usually written in the aftermath of their death, and thus victors wrote usurpers' histories. It is the post-usurpation narratives created by court-historiography as well as society that determine whether an individual was indeed 'a usurper' while the current king was a true king (and, of course, never had been anything else).

It is vital to acknowledge that the constructed narratives about previous rulers are dependent on the social and political contexts established by the succeeding regime, through court histories and other historical accounts, and thus we must question and closely examine the image of usurpers constructed in the evidence. The narratives regarding the Seleukid usurpers are inevitably negative. For example, Antiochos Hierax possessed a *sceleratam audaciam*, 'a villainous audacity' (Just. *Epit.* 27. 2. 7), and Tryphon did one of the few things that most societies condemn, he killed his ward (Jos. *Ant.* 13. 218–19). Yet we need to remember where these narratives come from, and we need to avoid a positivist reading of our sources. For this reason we need to consider in absolute brevity the major historians of the period whose narratives have been most influential in subsequent views of the period: Polybios, Poseidonios, and the authors of 1–2 Makkabees.³⁵ This cannot be the place to discuss in depth the attitudes of Hellenistic and Roman authors towards the Seleukid kings, but even a simplified (and perhaps at times crude) overview elucidates the problems that we face.

It is generally postulated that Polybios used a pro-Seleukid source for most of his account of the eastern adventures of the Seleukid kings, which came from the immediate surroundings of the Seleukid court.³⁶ Although he professes admiration for Antiochos III (which we should not simply attribute to the pro-Seleukid character of his source), it is hard to escape the impression that Polybios' attitude towards kings is not positive. Philip V's character deteriorates in Polybios' narrative from being a mild king (e.g. 4. 24. 9) to a tyrant

³⁵ On sources regarding the Seleukid empire: Primo 2009. His approach, however, is not always followed in this study.

³⁶ Schmitt 1964: 175–85; Primo 2009: 126–59, esp. 132–43. Also followed by Kosmin 2014: 66–7 with note 49. For Polybios' use of other sources see now: e.g. Meadows 2013b.

(e.g. 8. 12), and Polybios' decision to translate Seleukid references of luxury into drunkenness does not flatter his former friend Demetrios I (Pol. 33. 19; see ch. 5.1).³⁷ General criticism of the Seleukid rulers is also apparent in what has remained of the work of Poseidonios of Apameia.³⁸ The interests of the Judaeian sources about the Seleukid kings were also quite different to Seleukid court historiography. The author of 1 Makkabees praised the deeds of the Hasmonean rulers who wanted to distinguish themselves from the Seleukid kings. The author of 2 Makkabees also had no interest in portraying the Seleukid state after Antiochos III in a positive light.³⁹ It was principally these sources that later influenced the accounts of Diodoros, Josephus, Appian, Strabo, and Pompeius Trogus, or rather, Justin.⁴⁰ If, however, many of our main sources are based on Seleukid court historiography, which reflected the viewpoint of victors, and were constructed by authors such as Polybios and Poseidonios who did not reject these narratives but also often evoked anti-monarchic tendencies towards current rulers, the image they present of usurpers perhaps should not be entirely surprising. The Judaeian evidence, while not following Seleukid definitions of kings and usurpers, defines rulers' positions in relation to the people of Judaea, and demonizes those who fought against the Makkabees. Also here, the image of usurpers as bad kings if they fought against Judaea should not surprise us. Quite the contrary: the images are perfect since they fulfil the needs of both the literary genres in question and the interests of their authors.

³⁷ On Pol. and kings: Welwei 1963. On Pol. and Philip V: Walbank 2002b: 102–5. On Philip V and Antiochos III: McGing 2010: 95–128. Polybios' treatment of kings could certainly warrant further discussion. For a similar reading of Pol. and the Aitolians: Champion 2007. On narrative strategies: Miltisios 2011, and, excellently, Maier 2012. For a survey of Polybian studies: Walbank 2002a; and for the earlier period: Musti 1972. For anti-monarchic discourses see now the edited volume by Börm 2015, and the editor's introduction in particular.

³⁸ For Poseidonios' self-sufficiency, the criticism of luxury, and the luxury of kings: Bringmann 1986; Kidd 1986. For his position on the late Seleukid state: J. Engels 2011. For Poseidonios in Athenaios: Ceccarelli 2011.

³⁹ An introduction to 1 Makk: Goldstein 1976: 3–160; Schunck 1980: 291–2; Bartlett 1998 and Williams 1999; for a survey: Williams 2001, cf. Schunck 1954. On 2 Makk: Honigman 2014; Doran 2012; Schwartz 2008; see also Habicht 1976a; Habicht 1976b; note the survey in Williams 2003.

⁴⁰ On these authors: Primo 2009 s.v. On Appian: Brodersen has illustrated Appian's reliance on Polybios: Brodersen, *BAA* and *BAS*. For individual Strabo passages: Radt 2002–10. On Josephus' use of sources for the Hasmonean period: e.g. Atkinson 2011; Feldman 1994.

Where does this leave us? We are aware that the image of usurpers portrayed in the literary sources is part of a narrative that was hostile to usurpers, and either the ancient authors or the authors' sources were responsible for this depiction. In order to write a more nuanced and sophisticated account of usurpation, it is necessary to deconstruct the pro-Seleukid and anti-monarchic narratives. This approach is no longer revolutionary.⁴¹ Structuralist and post-structuralist studies have made scholarship aware of the discursive character of literary narratives, formed by the author's interests as well as their cultural influences.⁴² The approach of this study pays attention to the literary genre, authors' intentions, and the audience of the pieces, and thus aims to create a different picture of the politics of the Seleukid empire.

This picture of Seleukid history needs to account for the documentary evidence from the period, particularly epigraphic, archaeological, and numismatic material as well as realities of historical geography. The political activities of the Seleukid kings can be traced both in the physical and literary landscapes of the ancient eastern Mediterranean (e.g. Kosmin 2014). More directly, the epigraphic evidence clearly demonstrates the language of power, and the competition for communicative successes (Ma 2002). Usurpers' documents are very rare. Most of the few inscriptions that could be potentially attributed to third-century usurpers are either too fragmentary (*I.Milet* 270) or uncertain (*SEG* 1. 366; *RC* 41; *I.Ilion* 45A) to sustain a meaningful historical argument. There is, however, at least some material: 1 Makkabees preserves some of the usurpers' royal letters from the second century,⁴³ and some further insights can be gained by focusing on tokens of royal success other than those constructed through language, such as (successful) military campaigns or the display of wealth. While these stories about royal success once displayed different royal *personae*, and once were meant to underline the communicative efforts of kings and usurpers, we have to admit that most of the discourses, and many (if not most) aspects of royal *personae* of kings and usurpers, are either lost to us or transmitted without their appropriate contexts to generate a meaningful historical

⁴¹ For a post-colonial approach: Briant 2002: 6–8 and the criticism in Harrison 2011: esp. 19–37.

⁴² For structuralist readings of ancient history: e.g. Vidal-Naquet 1986; Ma 2000b, and Ma 2002 on Seleukid history; see now, excellently, Honigman 2014 on 1–2 Makkabees. For interpretations on the Roman empire inspired by post-structuralism: Veyne 1990; Flaig 1992.

⁴³ Ma 2000b.

argument. One major aspect of royal communication towards the groups in the kingdom, however, has survived: the royal coinage.

0.3c The Use of Coinage and Royal Images

Usurpers' coinages make it possible to identify aspects of their royal images, even if the survival of usurpers' coinage is at times limited. Only one silver tetradrachm of Molon is known (SC 950), and thus no conclusions can be reached about the extent of his coinage.⁴⁴ Yet it is only for the reign of Molon that hardly any coins survive. For example, there are now five precious issues known for the coinage of Achaïos, all with different mint markers, thus indicating a significant output, far higher than previously assumed (SC 952–3; Ad199–200). Secondly, it is apparent that the immediate output of a usurper cannot be judged on the amount of coinage that survives. The occurrence of overstrikes of Demetrios I (SC 1686–7; 1689) on the silver coinage of Timarchos has suggested to numismatists that the usurpers' initial output of tetradrachms was subsequently recalled and overstruck.⁴⁵ This assumption, however, might need some clarification. It is easy to envisage that rulers overstruck individual coins in their treasuries in order to signify a change of a ruler.⁴⁶ Initially it seems difficult to imagine that the Seleukid administrative state also systematically called in and collected coinage already in circulation. Yet J. Kroll, in a study relating to fourth-century Athens, has convincingly demonstrated the state's capacity to devalue specific coin series, which were then collected by the moneylenders and overstruck by the state.⁴⁷ Although the Seleukid empire was not the city of Athens, Kroll also outlines how the practices of devaluation and collection were not limited to Attica,⁴⁸ and

⁴⁴ The mint marker that links this tetradrachm to issues of Antiochos III (SC 1205–6; 1208–9) vouches for the coin's authenticity. Also, a few surviving bronze issues may indicate a larger output (SC 949; 951).

⁴⁵ Le Rider 1965: 332–4; *ESM* p. 86; *WSM* p. 269.

⁴⁶ See Klose and Müsseler 2008: 16–18 illustrating overstrikes on coinage from Seleukos I; Fischer 1988: 17 suggests that Molon's tetradrachm was struck over a different coin; however, this has not been acknowledged by scholarship, and I was unable to verify this from autopsy.

⁴⁷ Kroll 2011.

⁴⁸ Leukon I: Polyain. 6. 9. 1; Dionysios I of Syracuse: [Arist]. *Oec.* 2. 1349b. While the narratives are concerned with the unlawful behaviour of tyrants, surely showing discursive embellishment, the 'tyrannical' aspect was the profit the tyrants made, not the collection of the coins. Therefore, the practice could be valid: Kroll 2011: 230–1.

thus also might have applied in the Seleukid empire. While it is uncertain to what extent the Seleukid king could influence the local economy, Kroll's emphasis on the interests of money changers and individuals in exchanging devalued coins illustrates the potential impact of this practice in the Seleukid empire. If agency was placed in the hands of the individual, the administrative effort of collection was reduced.

This hypothesis can be corroborated if we consider the frequency with which usurpers' coinage survives. The coinage of Antiochos Hierax, Alexander Balas, Tryphon, and Alexander Zabinas is attested in reasonably large quantities; it is the coinage of Molon, Achaïos, and Timarchos that is relatively rare. However, if we correlate these quantities to the political climate after respective usurpations, patterns emerge. After the usurpation of Antiochos Hierax and Alexander Balas, the general structures of the Seleukid kingdom in these specific areas were generally weak: Asia Minor was lost to the Seleukids (see chs 1.1 and 2.1), and the second-century Levant was divided between at least two rival camps (see ch. 3). The regions where Molon, Achaïos, and Timarchos had been king, however, were reincorporated back under Seleukid control by Antiochos III and Demetrios I. While it is of course reasonable to suggest that the initial output of Molon and Timarchos' coinage had not been as large as that of Achaïos and Tryphon (given their longer reigns), it is at least plausible to suggest that their initial output was larger than is represented in our surviving samples, and that the usurpers' precious coinage in Babylonia, Media, and Lydia was collected and overstruck.

What does the surviving coinage tell us? The coinage can help us to understand usurpers' attempts to claim the diadem from two distinct angles. First, it allows us to map a political landscape of usurpation and power plays. The continuation of mint markers from king to usurper or from usurper to king enables us to determine the changing allegiance or subservience of specific cities. If coinage can be convincingly attributed to certain cities (and this has been the constant effort of the editors of *ESM*, *WSM*, and *SC*), the reach of usurpers' power can be interpreted. Yet if more than one contender for the diadem (king and usurper) was active in the same vicinity, these attributions also could illustrate the political dynamics of the period. The city's minting of a particular coinage might illustrate that the city sided with a power-holder; however, it may also indicate that the city

simply did not want to be within the political sphere of a second power-holder (this will be elaborated on in ch. 3.3). Mint marks and changed or continued dies can be interpreted either as strong statements of active allegiance, or as a default indication of acquiescence, or even indifference, and therefore should be treated with some caution. Coin types and mint marks only provide one narrow glimpse into the political situation at one particular moment. These snippets of evidence may give clues to the political alignments of the period, but it is necessary to be wary of the over-interpretation of these moments, as it is easy to underestimate the complexity of the political environment for which no other evidence survives.

Secondly, usurpers' coinage allows us to see an element of the usurpers' political programme: it was one aspect of their consciously constructed royal image which they wanted to distribute to their audiences, literally in the coin-pouches of their troops. Royal coinage was a crucial aspect of the royal image of a king, and a key part of the coinage was the portrait of the ruler. Also, royal portraits did not faithfully depict the sitter's features, but created a portrait of how a ruler chose to be seen.⁴⁹ The portrait might have a basis in historical reality, for instance the sitter's age, but realism was not the objective of these portraits. If the age of a sitter was a conscious part of the portrait, this was done to convey qualities or attributes associated with age, for instance youthful vigour or mature wisdom and experience.⁵⁰

Every Seleukid king from Antiochos I onwards created a distinct portrait that was different from that of his predecessors. Moreover, it was from the period of Seleukos II onwards that only the current rulers' portraits were displayed on the coinage. Certain features became 'Seleukid', and while it could be argued that this simply was a continuance of monetary practices, I argue that the continuation of

⁴⁹ See e.g. Jaeggi 2008: 13–19, 35–46, and 153–5. Note that e.g. Gans 2006: esp. 119–20 continues to identify the 'real' appearance.

⁵⁰ One might argue that coinage does not reflect any personal decisions of the ruler since this was decided at court (see e.g. Levick 1982: 104–16). Moreover, it could be suggested that in fact no political decision should be connected to the coinage at all, rather decisions about style were made by the die-makers and mints where royal coinage was created (see Kraft 1972: 94–6). For the coinage of Alexander the Great, see Le Rider 2003: 55–63 who minimizes the dynastic link in order to underline the credibility of the coinage. The coinage of the Seleukid empire, however, does not support these objections.

certain elements also had a political value (ch. 4.2). The Seleukid 'standard' portrait for the period between Seleukos II and Seleukos IV was relatively young and idealized. Since the reign of Antiochos I, Apollo on the Omphalos was the predominant motive on the reverses, and was only altered during the reigns of Seleukos II and Seleukos III, before reverting to the Omphalos style under Antiochos III. Therefore, a Seleukid canon and formulae were established which placed emphasis on the individual portrait. The Seleukid coinage was a medium of political communication. Of course, the idealized portrait of Antiochos III on the coinage might be different from the image of the sacrificing king in Babylon (AD II 187A),⁵¹ and the image of the same king losing his teeth in battle in Areia (Pol. 10. 49. 14). It is these aspects that illustrate the different *personae* in the royal image of the king.⁵² The importance of the Seleukid coinage as a political medium of communication is further underlined through the coinage of the usurpers. While the usurpers place certain stress on continuity with the mainstream types on their coins to guarantee monetary credibility, the usurpers' coinage is strikingly different from that of their Seleukid contemporaries.⁵³ Thus, while the scarcity of sources does not always enable us to examine the full royal image of a usurper, the usurpers' coinage allows us to analyse one distinct element of their royal images. This one aspect permits us to draw conclusions about their claims to the diadem, and we can compare these royal images with those of their contemporaries (chs 2.2, 3.2, and 4.1).

Further aspects of the usurpers' royal images have to be disentangled from their original literary context, as outlined, and in the deconstruction of the literary texts in particular, this undertaking is not free from controversy. It is not always possible to ascertain which image of the usurper is to be reconstructed (particularly from far-removed literary sources), and therefore readers might disagree occasionally on individual points of the narrative. For example, when Polybios writes that Molon's kingdom in its furthest extent reached the city of Doura Europos (Pol. 5. 48. 16), it is unclear whether this is an accurate depiction of Molon's power, or whether the usurper's control was exaggerated either by Polybios or his source to underline the initial threat (and ultimate victory) for Antiochos III. Without

⁵¹ On this document and Antiochos III: now Haubold forthcoming.

⁵² See Smith 2004: 73.

⁵³ On the credibility of coinage: Martin 1985; Meadows 2001.

additional evidence, we cannot know where on the Euphrates Molon's control ended. Ultimately, this question is only of secondary importance and cannot be the scope of this book. Instead, this study will create a picture of usurpation and establish patterns in the competition for power in the Seleukid kingdom; it is hoped that these patterns will remain unchallenged by any controversy with regard to the narrative.

Central and Local Power in the Seleukid Empire

The world of usurpers is that of the Hellenistic empires. But how these empires should be understood, and how they could be appropriately described is another matter: should one look from the top or rather from below? Was the state weak, or strong, and to ask an essential if not too simplistic question: how did it work? In order to assess usurpers within the environment of the Seleukid empire, it is vital to consider questions regarding power and power-relationships within the Seleukid state, and this is what this chapter will offer. It will not provide a history of the Seleukid empire compressed into the format of a chapter, rather it will provide a ‘short history of Seleukid power’, into which the actions, performances, and discourses of usurpers can be placed.

The Seleukid administration had a far-reaching apparatus, from the commanders of entire regions, to satraps, *hyparchoi*, and local *epistatai* governing hill villages and valleys. The Nikanor dossiers from Asia Minor, and the Olympiodoros dossiers from the Levant can exemplarily demonstrate these levels of control.¹ One of the dossiers regarding the Seleukid official Nikanor from Phrygian Philomelion (*SEG* 54. 1353) describes the process of Seleukid administration in this particular region: the king, Antiochos III, sent a *prostagma*—a royal edict—concerning the appointment of Nikanor to the high priesthood on this side of the Tauros to Zeuxis, his second

¹ On administration: e.g. Capdetrey 2007: 257–66; Ma 2002: 108–74; Robert and Robert 1983: 176–80. For a hill-commander see e.g. Chionis ‘the one left in charge’ of Alinda under Antiochos III: *Amyzon* 14. On the Olympiodoros dossier: *SEG* 57. 1838; see Bencivenni 2011; see also note 7 in the Introduction.

in command in Asia Minor (ll. 25–38); Zeuxis forwarded this letter alongside a command to his subordinate Philomelos (ll. 20–4), who, in return, sent orders to his subordinates (ll. 16–19 and 6–15). The parallel dossier from Mysian Pamukçu (SEG 37. 1010 with SEG 54. 1237) contains the same order from Antiochos III to Zeuxis, which then was sent by the Seleukid administrator to the next appropriate local level. The presence of these parallel dossiers underlines that we are indeed glancing at the system of the Seleukid administrative state.²

Beyond the level of Seleukid administration that led from the Seleukid centre to the arteries of the empire there was also a second layer of regional control: a layer that effectively can be described as local power-holders, and it is this layer that this chapter will examine. For reasons of clarity this chapter will only focus on a few cases.³ The local power-holders were local rulers, dynasts, some controlling perhaps not more than a valley or strip of coastline, such as Ptolemaios, the son of Lysimachos in Lykian Telmessos,⁴ while others had more extensive possessions, such as the Attalids of Pergamon. With the Attalids and the Philomelids of Phrygia, dynasts were well represented in Asia Minor;⁵ the phenomenon, however, was not limited to this region: the Diodotids of Baktria, the *frataraka* in the Persis, the rulers of Armenia, and the Makkabees of Jerusalem fall into the same category. From an outside perspective these rulers appeared independent.⁶ They minted their own coinage, and—as with the Attalids under Philetairos—they founded their own cities, acted as benefactors, and were honoured by local communities in return.⁷ They provided local administration, security, and

² On the dossiers: Malay 2004. On Nikanor's position within the empire: Ma 2002: 138–46; Dignas 2002: 45–56; van Nuffelen 2004.

³ In a way, the dynasts/kings of Bithynia, Pontos, Kappadokia, and Kommagene did not play a role here, but might be part of a similar phenomenon. Davies 2002: 7 describes the need to study these agents, as well as the difficulties in carrying out this undertaking. On some additional local power-holders: Chrubasik forthcoming b.

⁴ On the rulers of Telmessos: Capdetrey 2007: 122–3; TAM II 1.1 (previously published as OGIS 55); for discussion: Gygas 2001: 143–99; Kobes 1996: 145–56; Wörrle 1978: 218–25. Surely, however, we can interpret the Ptolemaic *dōrea* as a *dynasteia*. See also Savalli 1987 and note Gygas 2001: 211–13.

⁵ Wilhelm 1911; Holleaux 1942a. The dynasts of Asia Minor have been collected by Kobes 1996 and Billows 1995: 90–107 not always with convincing results; see now Capdetrey 2007: 112–33 and S. Mitchell forthcoming.

⁶ For the limitations on the concept of sovereignty in the Hellenistic world: Davies 2002: 12.

⁷ See ch. 1.1a.

benefactions, and while acting in their own interests, they also acted in the interest of Seleukid stability, and are even explicitly mentioned as being a part of the Seleukid administration. The individual Philomelos, addressed by Zeuxis in a letter in one version of the Nikanor dossier, mentioned above, is not only part of the Seleukid administration, probably as a *hyparchos*, but also he is a local dynast in Phrygia, where one of his ancestors founded the city of Philomelion and where the dossier was found.⁸ The mention of a local dynast framed within the language of Seleukid administration is reminiscent of the appointment of the Makkabaeen high priest Jonathan among the First Friends of the king, as well as the bestowal of the titles of *stratēgos* and *meridarch* by Alexander Balas after his accession in 150 (1 Makk. 10. 65). While the second-century Judaeen episode in particular has been primarily interpreted as a concession to the growing strength of the Makkabees,⁹ I have argued elsewhere that at least in this instance there was continuing Makkabaeen interest in these royal grants.¹⁰ Therefore, both the examples from Phrygia and Judaea demonstrate the incorporation of local power into the state administration of the Seleukid empire.

Of course, these dynasts might ‘forget’ their allegiance to the Seleukid king at times when the presence of the central state was weakened, and even engage against Seleukid troops. One could argue, however, that this was not much more than one of the exigencies of their position, which resulted from both internal and external pressures. By doing so, they were not necessarily different from other groups within the empire: military settlers could secede, as could communities such as Greek cities, and it was the creation of a relationship between the local and central level, or the threatened or actual appearance of the large Seleukid army, that would remind both dynasts and cities of their tax-duties and allegiances.¹¹ These dynasts were located in regions that were deemed to belong to the empire, but were nevertheless not part of the central axis Seleukid power, and thus were considered suitable to be administered by local power-holders. For example, the domain of the Teukrid priest-dynasts at Uzunca-burç in the mountainous territory north-east of Seleukeia on the

⁸ See ch. 1.1a.

⁹ e.g. Ma 2000b.

¹⁰ Chrubasik forthcoming b.

¹¹ More on this question in section 1.3 of this chapter. On seceding mercenaries: OGIS 266. 20–52 (under Eumenes I); Pol. 5. 50. 8 and 57. 4 (under Antiochos III). On cities: e.g. second-century Antiocheia on the Orontes: 1 Makk. 11. 45–6.

Kalykadnos was important since it formed a second-century border of Seleukid control, yet the hilly uplands were undoubtedly peripheral; the close relationship between second-century Judaea and the Seleukid king (both before and after the Makkabaeen revolt) is part of the same strategic picture.¹² Although some dynasts, such as the Jewish high priest Jonathan, who was inscribed among the *πρώτοι φίλοι* ‘First Friends’ of Alexander Balas (1 Makk. 10. 65), could be part of the official group of royal Friends (*philoi*), they were not members of the Seleukid ruling elite, that is, the friends of the king. They did not have a long-standing loyalty with large contingents of the Seleukid army or connections with the high-powered friends of the kings; they also were not members of the Seleukid court. In order to address the position of dynasts within the Seleukid empire, this chapter will demonstrate how local power-holders were an integral part of it—a part that supported the administration of the empire. Therefore, the Seleukid empire presented here will be a different, and arguably a more appropriate, social and political world into which the usurpers of the Seleukid empire can be placed.

1.1 DYNASTS IN ALL THE LAND

The most important contribution to lead the way towards our modern understanding of local dynasts within their environment has been made by G. Le Rider, who argued persuasively that the first Pergamene coin issues were not minted with the start of Eumenes I’s reign, but rather were issued under the first ruler of the dynasty, Philetairos.¹³ Previously, scholarship had dated the minting of coinage to the reign of Eumenes I, and thus interpreted it as an assertion of local independence from the Seleukid kings, an emphatic change to the previous period.¹⁴ Le Rider’s numismatic observation stands in the context of the redating of many third-century coin series, which has resulted from the major hoard find in southern Asia Minor at

¹² On the Teukrid dominion: Trampedach 1999; Trampedach 2001; Wannagat 2005; and Kramer 2012. On Judaea, see ch. 3.3b.

¹³ Le Rider 1992a; endorsed and elaborated by Meadows 2013a; de Callataÿ 2013; Marcellesi 2012: 88–92; see also the reconstruction in Chrubasik 2013.

¹⁴ e.g. Hansen 1971: 21–2; Allen 1983: 20–6.

Meydancikkale,¹⁵ but its impact for the question of local power is enormous: the minting of independent coinage by Philetairos, a ruler who was acting under Seleukid authority, breaks a link that scholarship had upheld for most of the twentieth century. G. Martin argued in his 1985 study that local coinages should not necessarily be read at face value and therefore might not give indications of allegiances,¹⁶ but the coinage of Pergamon under Philetairos demonstrates clearly—and finally—that the minting of local coinage with its own obverse and reverse styles should not be interpreted as evidence of political independence (nor, as I will argue in ch. 3.3c, does the minting of ‘dependent’ coinage necessitate political dependency). Local dynasts could mint coinage and still be under an umbrella of Seleukid control. This contention significantly transforms the way in which dynasts within the Seleukid empire should be approached, and, crucially, how also other evidence regarding the dynasts should be interpreted. While at times there are further indicators of the assertion of dynasts’ local independence than coinage alone, a brief sketch of local power-holders will suffice to demonstrate not only that the literary and documentary evidence concerning the dynasts is not unequivocal testimony of local resistance, but also that it establishes a different image of how local control was exercised in the Seleukid empire.

1.1a Dynasts in the Western Empire: Pergamon and Philomelion

The arrival of the campaigning Seleukos I in Asia Minor on the eve of the battle at Kouroupedion in 281 was the beginning of a long relationship between the local communities of Anatolia and the Seleukid kings.¹⁷ One of the local power-holders of Asia Minor was the ruler of the Mysian city of Pergamon, and it is instructive to follow the dynast’s path under Seleukid rule. Philetairos seceded to Seleukos I, who left him in control of the fortress. The Seleukid king himself won the battle, and (as the Babylonian accounts report) he ‘made his army cross the sea with him, and to the land of *Makkadunu*

¹⁵ Davesne and Le Rider 1989. ¹⁶ Martin 1985.

¹⁷ For the Attalid–Seleukid relationship: Chrubasik 2013. To provide the reader with a more thorough account of the relationship between the communities of Antaolia and the Seleukid kings, some of the arguments presented in Chrubasik 2013 will be repeated here.

(Macedonia), his land, he went . . . and (X) killed him' (*BCHP* 9 rev. 2–4).¹⁸ Philetairos' position was influential. Strabo describes him as the 'lord of the stronghold and the treasure', and while this might relate to a semi-official administrative position under Seleukid rule, it certainly expresses his personal power.¹⁹

The benefactions of the first ruler of Pergamon in Asia Minor and central Greece clearly demonstrate his financial capacity as well as the radius of his actions. He gave dedications to the sanctuaries at Delos and Delphi. His benefactions to Delphi were reciprocated with the award of *proxenia* for himself, for his adopted son Attalos, and Attalos' brother Eumenes, as early as in the 280s (*F.Delphes* III. 1. 432). Beyond the large religious centres, however, he also gave benefactions to the sanctuary of the Muses at Thespiiai, and to many communities closer to Pergamon.²⁰ The dedications from Asia Minor, in particular, also demonstrate that he was clearly incorporated within a Seleukid framework. Philetairos was a benefactor of the sanctuary of Apollo Chrēstērios in Aigai, and he dedicated land and a *propylon* to the sanctuary while Aigai was apparently under Seleukid control; the city also had a Seleukid mint under Antiochos II (*SC* 494–6).²¹ He gave benefactions to Pitane while it was a Seleukid city (*IG* 12 suppl. 142. 135–6),²² and a large dossier containing three decrees and one letter between the city of Kyme and Philetairos demonstrates that this was not an isolated phenomenon (*SEG* 50. 1195).²³ In the first decree, the city of Kyme sent two envoys asking Philetairos to sell them 600 shields for the defence of the city and its hinterland. Philetairos in return wrote a letter to the community giving the shields as a gift (*δωρεά*) to the *demos*.²⁴ The city drew up

¹⁸ On the death of Seleukos I, see also *CM* 4 obv. 8; Just. *Epit.* 17. 2. 1–6; Memnon *FGrHist* 434 F8. 1–2; Mehl 1986: 290–321; Kosmin 2014: 80–7; cf. Heinen 1972.

¹⁹ Strab. 13. 4. 1: *κύριος ὢν τοῦ φρουρίου καὶ τῶν χρημάτων*; Allen 1983: 13–14.

²⁰ For a list: Orth 2008: 486–7; see the map in Schalles 1985: 150.

²¹ Aigai: *OGIS* 312; Schalles 1985: 33–6; see also *SEG* 49. 1746 under Eumenes I (this is the text from Herrmann and Malay 1999: no. 3). A boundary stone from Aigai, probably dating to the reign of Antiochos II, indicates Seleukid authority: *SEG* 19. 720; see also *SEG* 33. 1034; with Herrmann 1959: 4–6; cf. Orth 1977: 124–38; 158–72.

²² With Savalli-Lestrade 1992; see also n. 41.

²³ *Ed. pr.* Manganaro 2000; *BE* 2001: nos. 54 and 373; Gauthier 2003c; Hamon 2008; cf. Chrubasik 2013.

²⁴ For the first decree: ll. 1–13. Letter of Philetairos: ll. 14–19; Second decree: ll. 20–30; Third decree: ll. 30–54 (the last decree is not complete).

a second decree to reward his *euergetism* with honours, and this text is particularly revealing for the relationship between the city and the dynast. Philetairos was said to be a long-standing *euergetēs* of the past (l. 20), and is honoured with a golden crown for his gift of 600 shields, which showed his excellence and goodwill towards the community (ll. 25–6). Moreover, it was decreed that ‘an akrolithic statue as fine as possible should be set up in the sacred room of the Philetaireion’ (ll. 26–7). These proceedings were to be announced by the *agōnothetēs* at the next joint festival of the Dionysia and Antiocheia (ll. 27–8); the third decree also mentions a joint procession for the *Sôtēria* and Philetaireia (l. 42).²⁵

The dynast Philetairos was fully engraved in the civic and cultic landscape of the community. A festival in his name remembered previous contributions, and the Kymeans had built a sacred building in his name, where a new honorific statue was to be set up. These honours should not make us forget, however, that Philetairos was acting within a Seleukid space. Philetairos’ recent honours were announced at the Dionysia and Antiocheia, probably a major local festival to which Antiochos I’s name had been added by the people of Kyme.²⁶ This mention of a King Antiochos was not a relic of the past whose original meaning had been forgotten. Instead, the location of royal mints in Kyme (SC 502–5), and the neighbouring cities of Myrina (SC 498–501) and Phokaia (SC 508–13) under Antiochos II, as well as a letter from either Antiochos I or Antiochos II to Ephesos regarding the Kymaians (RC 17), indicate that Kyme was a city within the Seleukid empire.²⁷

Philetairos was only the most prominent among other dynasts who were portrayed in a similar light in the surviving evidence. The

²⁵ In contrast to the ‘Dionysia and Antiocheia’, the *Sôtēria* and the Philetaireia appear to be separate festivals with a joint pompē: Buraselis 2003; cf. Orth 2008: 489. Gauthier 2003c: 11–19 discussed the type of statue—an image as fine as possible with a statue of wood.

²⁶ A decree from Aigai illustrates how both Seleukos I and Antiochos I were honoured as saviours (ll. 12–13), and local *phylai* were renamed Seleukis and probably Antiochis (ll. 24–5), thus inscribing the Seleukid kings into the daily life of the *polis*: SEG 59. 1406 A; ed. *pr.* Malay and Riel 2009; see Habicht 1970: 82–105; 147–56.

²⁷ The editors of SC suggest that all three mints could have been operating under a single mint authority (see SC i.1 p. 179 for references). Royal letter: see Dittenberger’s discussion in OGIS 242 and *I.Kyme* 3. For the internal dynamics of Kyme: Hamon 2008: 104–6; see BE 2005: no. 395.

Delphians also honoured the dynast Lysias, son of Philomelos.²⁸ The family of the Philomelids had ancestral possessions in central Phrygia, and Lysias is mentioned as a military leader, presumably in the service of Seleukos III, against the (later) king Attalos I (*OGIS* 277). Lysias was part of the group of benefactors that responded to the crisis of the Rhodian earthquake, traditionally dated to 227 (Pol. 5. 90.1). The Philomelids also founded their own cities, Philomelion and Lysias.²⁹ Yet despite city foundations, the rulers from Phrygia were clearly integrated within a Seleukid framework. The Seleukid dossier concerning Nikanor from Phrygian Philomelion mentioned above was not only found near the city of the Phrygian dynasts, but it also mentions its ruler, Philomelos, strikingly not as a dynast, but as part of the hierarchy of Seleukid officials (*SEG* 54. 1353. 16 and 20). Using nearly the same wording as the stele from Mysian Pamukçu, Zeuxis wrote to Philomelos, who can only be interpreted as the local Seleukid power-holder, 'you would do well, therefore, by giving orders for your subordinates to obey the orders and carry out things as he [i.e. Antiochos III] thinks fit.'³⁰

The foundation of settlements should not be entirely surprising: the pre-Seleukid foundation of the city of Dokimeion, near modern Afyon, by a commander of Lysimachos, is very similar if placed in the context of dynasts' foundations within royal territories.³¹ Philetairos also had established new settlements. The military settlements of Attaleia and Philetaireia under Ida, mentioned in a well-known document of Eumenes I (*OGIS* 266), were surely founded by Philetairos, and they should not be seen as a sign of local independence, but rather as an example of the delegation of local power.³² Beyond his benefactions and the foundation of cities and military colonies,

²⁸ On the Philomelids: Wilhelm 1911; Holleaux 1942a; Malay 2004; cf. Billows 1995: 99–100.

²⁹ Malay 2004: 411; Wilhelm 1911: 50–3. See the discussion in Robert 1962: 156–7 and Ruge 1938. While the discovery of *SEG* 54.1353 near Philomelion, mentioned in Strab. 14. 2. 29, should be seen as a strong indication of the city's foundation in this period, the city is not mentioned in the inscription as erroneously suggested in Chrubasik 2013: 90. See Kobes 1996: 220–3.

³⁰ *SEG* 54. 1353. 22–4: καλῶς ἂν οἶν | [πο]νήσαις σ[υ]ν[τάξας] ἐπακολουθήσαντας τοῖς ἐπισταλμένοις | [σ]υντελεῖν ὥσπερ οἶται δεῖν. For the same phrase in the Pamukçu stele: *SEG* 37. 1010. 13–16.

³¹ For Dokimos' foundation: Tcherikover 1927: 35; Robert 1980: 240–4; Lund 1992: 82; S. Mitchell forthcoming.

³² Kosmetatou 2001: 113–14.



Fig. 1.1 Tetradrachm of Philetairos, mint Pergamon, c.280–71 BCE, ANS 1967.152.413. Courtesy of the American Numismatic Society.



Fig. 1.2 Tetradrachm of Philetairos, mint Pergamon, c.270–263 BCE, ANS 1944.100.43174. Courtesy of the American Numismatic Society.

Philetairos also minted his own coinage, first in the name of the Seleukos I, and then in his own name. The obverse on the first series depicts a very finely executed portrait of Seleukos I, and a reverse of the seated Athena (formerly prominent on the coinage of Lysimachos) adorned with the legend of Philetairos (Fig. 1.1). At some later point, Philetairos replaced the Seleukid portrait on the obverse with one that depicted himself (Fig. 1.2). Whether Philetairos obtained the right to strike coinage, or whether he simply took it, is impossible to determine. Two scenarios can be imagined: it is possible that Antiochos I, perhaps in the context of Seleukid resurgence in Asia Minor, granted the dynast of Pergamon further liberties which included the foundation of his own military colonies and the minting of his own coinage with his portrait. Alternatively, Philetairos could have begun minting his own coinage, perhaps in the years when the Seleukid king was absent, in order to underline his position in northern Asia Minor; a decision which in any event was not opposed. Regardless of who the initiator was, there is a parallel in the issue of



Fig. 1.3 Tetradrachm of Artaxerxes, mint Persis, c. early C3 BCE, Staatliche Münzsammlung München, ex Slg. Reuter, Klose and Müseler Nr. 2/9. Courtesy of Staatliche Münzsammlung München.

the so-called *frataraka* coinage in the Persis during the same period (Fig. 1.3).³³ The limited impact of the coinage to the relationship between the Attalids and the Seleukid kings perhaps can be most aptly demonstrated in a later document when Philetairos' successor Eumenes I continued to date his treaties according to the Seleukid era (OGIS 266. 10–11).³⁴

We should approach the issue of the 'right to found military colonies' very similarly: it is questionable whether an official grant ever occurred, and more importantly, whether this was needed. These foundations did not hinder the relationship between the local dynasts and the Seleukid kings. Neither the minting of individual coinage nor the foundation of military colonies were necessarily signifiers of local independence or of a dynast's defiance of central control. The Phrygian Nikanor dossier demonstrates the double nature of these local dynasts. They were dynasts and local benefactors, who conducted wars and minted their own coins. Nevertheless, as the benefactions of Philetairos to a community with a Seleukid mint and the mention of Philomelos within a Seleukid dossier demonstrate, these dynasts were also part of the Seleukid administrative structure.³⁵ How this relationship was interpreted in practice and over time could, of course, vary both at the central and local levels.

³³ See n. 47.

³⁴ Previously published as *I.Pergamon* 13. 10–11, followed by Allen 1983: 24 n. 50; Kosmetatou 2001: 113.

³⁵ The former scholarly conflict of dynasts within larger territories caused by a too strict, and perhaps too legal, approach is nicely exemplified in Wörle 1978: 207–25.

When Philetairos died, his nephew Eumenes I inherited control over Pergamon. Strabo reports that Eumenes I defeated Antiochos I in a battle near Sardeis (13. 4. 2), and this battle has been traditionally interpreted to mark the break of the Attalid dynasts from Seleukid control. This conflict, however, did not alter the long-term position of the Attalids within the Seleukid state. I have suggested elsewhere that the memory of this battle might have received a new interpretation in the second-century Attalid state, projecting the kingdom's (then) political world view into its third-century past.³⁶ Therefore, while there is no reason to assume that this battle did not occur, we must place it in its long-term context. Apart from the battle mentioned in Strabo, no Seleukid–Attalid encounter is known until the clashes between Attalos I and Antiochos Hierax more than twenty years later,³⁷ and it is in the crucial period between the deaths of Antiochos I (261) and Antiochos II (246) that there is no evidence of any sort of relationship between the Attalids and the Seleukid kings. The Kyme dossier, alongside Philetairos' coinage and his foundation of settlements, is critical for interpreting the first twenty years of this relationship. Similarly, after the accession of Attalos I, the (later) monumental accounts of the Attalids suggest continuous warfare between the Attalids, different Galatian groups, Antiochos Hierax, and other Seleukid troops.³⁸ What, then, should we expect for the period in-between? Of course it is possible that battle narratives from these years have not survived. One could even imagine that a reinsertion of the Attalids under the Seleukid umbrella might be lost to us. But even if lost battles might have been forgotten, one would have expected the Attalids (or their later court historiographers) to make much of any further victories over their Seleukid neighbours, as with the victory over Antiochos I. There were ample opportunities for military contact: Antiochos II's campaigns in western Asia Minor (and with him large contingents of the Seleukid army) during the Second Syrian War were extensive, as was Seleukid minting in the Aiolis. Yet the dynasts of Pergamon are elusive—arguably this would have been easiest while remaining Seleukid power-holders.

Even if one were to adopt a more traditional picture of the Attalid state than the one I will propose here, with greater emphasis placed on the battle narrated in Strabo while ignoring the silence in the

³⁶ Chrubasik 2013: 93–5.

³⁷ See Mehl 1998: 251; Hamon 2008: 104–5.

³⁸ On these monuments, see ch. 2.1b.

sources, it is difficult to ascertain any clear evidence of Eumenes I's break with the Seleukid kings.³⁹ The coinage of Eumenes I was far from revolutionary: if his coinage began with the so-called Group III of the Pergamene mint, he replaced the rolled headband on the portrait of Philetairos with a wreath.⁴⁰ There is little evidence of an expansion of Attalid territory under Eumenes I: Pitane—long thought to document Attalid expansion during this time—was given to the Attalids by Seleukos II, and this implies that Pitane was not Attalid before this date.⁴¹ As argued above, also the military colonies mentioned in a treaty by Eumenes I were most likely founded by Philetairos, and thus only the Seleukid dating formula provides some indication of Eumenes I's position in the Seleukid empire.⁴²

Also, the kingship of Attalos I and his battles against the (often presumed) Seleukid overlords have influenced the perception of the mid-third-century Attalid state,⁴³ but also here, the evidence is more complicated: while there is no further evidence for Seleukid–Attalid relations under Seleukos II beyond the Seleukid grant of Pitane to Eumenes I, it is perhaps not accidental that Attalid resistance to external control took the form of opposition to Antiochos Hierax, who had just defeated his brother Seleukos II at Ankyra, and who must not have necessarily been perceived as the territorial overlord (see ch. 2). Attalos I fought against Galatian tribes, Antiochos Hierax, and later Achaïos (who first acted as a Seleukid agent, then independently), and he tried to strengthen his hold over north-western Asia Minor.⁴⁴ Although Seleukos III later crossed the Tauros to re-establish Seleukid control (Pol. 4. 48. 6), this does not necessitate that Attalos I's initial opposition to the new kingdom of Antiochos Hierax was unwelcome to Seleukos II.

Later, Antiochos III made a *koinopragia* with the Attalid ruler (Pol. 5. 107. 4), and eventually Attalos I must have been concerned about

³⁹ Allen 1983: 20–6.

⁴⁰ Westermarck 1961: group II: V.1–V.10; group III: V.11–29; de Callatay 2013; Meadows 2013a.

⁴¹ It is plausible to place this expansion in the context of Seleukos II's accession: OGIS 335 is superseded by IG 12 suppl. 142 which includes Robert's improved text (OMS III: 1572); Savalli-Lestrade 1992: 226; Capdetrey 2007: 118; Hamon 2008: 105; *contra* Allen 1983: 21; Virgilio 1993: 15–16.

⁴² See n. 32.

⁴³ For an Attalid narrative: Allen 1983: 28–35.

⁴⁴ Although the campaigns of Achaïos also demonstrated Attalid limitations, see ch. 2.1c.

the Seleukid conquest of Asia Minor, as it could only mean an infringement of Attalid authority and a reincorporation of the Attalid rule into a sphere of Seleukid influence;⁴⁵ nevertheless accounts of open hostilities have not survived. The ultimate result of the Seleukid conquests is eventually visible: the Attalid kingdom under Eumenes II joined the side of Rome and profited immensely from the war against Antiochos III. Yet this late picture of Attalid–Seleukid tensions and hostilities should not necessarily question the co-existence of local and central power in Asia Minor for the first half of the third century, and even beyond.⁴⁶

A thorough re-evaluation of the available evidence under Philetairos and Eumenes I clearly demonstrates the potential of the early Attalid rulers in their interaction with the local communities and the independence of their action, and this is instructive for our understanding of local power-holders. While the Attalid rulers were acting in their own name, like the Philomelids of Phrygia, they were acting within a Seleukid space. At times they would oppose the central administration, but this did not have to have a long-lasting impact on their relationship. One could even hypothesize that the acclamation of Attalos I as king, characterized emphatically against the Galatians, was more in favour of the politics of Seleukos II than against it, and that the local dynasts were not only defending their own interests against Antiochos Hierax and later Achaïos, but by opposing the Seleukid usurpers, they also fought ultimately in the interest of the Seleukid kings.

1.1b Dynasts in the East: Baktria, Parthia, and the Persis

As in the western parts of the Seleukid empire, dynasts were a common phenomenon in the Seleukid east, and while their particulars are often elusive, general patterns emerge relatively clearly which can further the observations from the western parts of the empire. Already in the reign of the first two Seleukid kings, the *frataraka* in the Seleukid region of the Persis minted their own governor's coinage

⁴⁵ The limitations of Attalid possessions seem to be apparent with the Seleukid dossier from Mysian Pamukçu (*SEG* 37. 1010 with 54. 1237), and the loss of Aizanoi in this period: Wörrle 2009: 426 n. 74.

⁴⁶ I have argued elsewhere that the early relationship between Antiochos III and Attalos I also could be interpreted in this light: Chrubasik 2013: 96–105.

(Fig. 1.3).⁴⁷ Like the rulers of Pergamon, the *frataraka* seem to have controlled the Persis for generations. Polybios mentions Alexander, the brother of Molon (Pol. 5. 40. 7), as a Seleukid governor in the Persis in the late third century,⁴⁸ and while this might indicate changes in the Seleukid administration of the Persis, we should at least bear the Philomelion dossier in mind, which suggests that the presence of central control (or the language of central control) does not necessarily preclude the simultaneous presence of local rulers. Accepting the persuasive conclusion that the production of local coinage did not necessarily imply local independence, the traditional picture of Seleukid disintegration of the eastern provinces should be revised. A fresh interpretation of the evidence from the eastern satrapies can further enrich a history of power in the Seleukid empire.

Polybios' fragmentary narrative of Antiochos III's *anabasis*, the king's march up east into central Asia, reveals the presence of dynasts in the eastern parts of the empire.⁴⁹ In c.212 Antiochos III brought Xerxes of Armenia back under Seleukid rule, thus securing Seleukid control in southern Armenia (Pol. 8. 23),⁵⁰ and likely in the autumn of 210 Antiochos III sailed down the Euphrates.⁵¹ Soon afterwards, presumably in 209, we find the king in Ekbatana preparing his expedition, and in 210 or 209 he appointed his son as co-regent (CM 4 rev. 4–5). Polybios writes that the precious metals from the sanctuary of Anahita in Ekbatana were stripped 'to coin royal money' in order to finance the eastern campaign. Both Polybios and Justin add that afterwards the king marched against the Parthians with

⁴⁷ The recent vigorous discussion has been detailed by D. Engels 2013. Klose and Müsseler 2008: 16–20 and Curtis 2010 argue persuasively for an early third-century date for the dynasts, and Hoover in SC ii.2 pp. 213–15 explains the new relative chronology. See, however, Wiesehöfer 1994: 119–27; Wiesehöfer 2011 and now Pilschke 2014: 310–11 who favour a second-century date.

⁴⁸ On Alexander: cf. Schmitt 1964: 127.

⁴⁹ For two very different accounts: Kuhrt and Sherwin-White 1993: 197–202; Lerner 1999: 45–62. On Polybios' narrative of the eastern campaigns: Coloru 2009: 66–9.

⁵⁰ Perhaps this also led to the renewed control over Kommagene: Kuhrt and Sherwin-White 1993: 190–7.

⁵¹ Pol. 9. 43; Walbank, *HCP* II: 186–7 with 14 for the season and year; see also Niese 1899: 397 n. 6. If autumn is the correct season, Antiochos III would have spent a long time in Armenia, perhaps giving credibility to the suggestion in Holleaux 1930: 140 that the king returned to Antiocheia.

a large force.⁵² Having taken Hekatompylos, he advanced to Hyrkania, and after some skirmishes, battles, and sieges en route, he came to an agreement with the Parthian king, Arsakes II (Just. *Epit.* 41. 5. 7).⁵³ Antiochos III continued to push further east.⁵⁴ Polybios narrated the violent occupation of a riverbank in Areia, perhaps the Hari River west of modern Herat, by the Seleukid army and noted the personal courage of Antiochos III. Euthydemos, who was not present at this encounter, was *καταπλαγείς*, ‘terror-struck’ at this Seleukid success, and retreated north-east to the city of Baktra in the Oxus valley (Pol. 10. 49. 1–15). For Polybios, the siege of Baktra was one of the big military set pieces of its time, on a par with the sieges of Sardeis, Carthage, and Corinth; the account, however, is lost.⁵⁵ Polybios’ next fragment records negotiations between Euthydemos and Antiochos III (Pol. 11. 34. 1–10),⁵⁶ whereby Euthydemos argued that because of external pressures and Baktria’s peripheral position, it needed a strong king. This proposition should not be understood as an affront to the Seleukid kings, as Euthydemos had defeated those who had seceded from the empire. Antiochos III gave his consent to Euthydemos’ proposal, who sent his son, Demetrios, to ratify the treaty. Antiochos III promised one of his daughters to Demetrios, received rations of corn for his troops, the elephants of Euthydemos’ army, and left Baktria to march further south-east, crossing the Hindu Kush towards India, presumably by way of modern-day Kabul (Pol. 11. 34. 9–12).⁵⁷ Antiochos III was presumably the first

⁵² Ekbatana and the wealth of Media: Pol. 10. 27. For the money: Pol. 10. 27. 13: τὸ χαραχθὲν εἰς τὸ βασιλικὸν . . . νόμισμα. For the phrase: Walbank, *HCP* II: 235. Force: Pol. 10. 28. 1; Just. *Epit.* 41. 5. 7. For royal revenue: Aperghis 2004: 171–5. It was also from the east that the king sent the decree concerning the high priesthood of Nikanor: SEG 37. 1010 (with SEG 54. 1237) and SEG 54. 1353.

⁵³ See also Pol. 10. 27–31; Walbank, *HCP* II: 231–42; Coloru 2009: 179; Lerner 1999: 45–7; Will 1979: 57–8; and Plischke 2014: 269–70 who summarizes the discussion.

⁵⁴ For this campaign see also the overview in Plischke 2014: 271–4.

⁵⁵ Pol. 29. 12. 8.

⁵⁶ The fragment is presumably from 206: Walbank, *HCP* II: 312; Coloru 2009: 184–6; Lerner 1999: 51. For Antiochos III’s interest in negotiations: Pol. 11. 34. 7: ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς, πάλαι περιβλεπόμενος λύσιν τῶν πραγμάτων, . . . , προθύμως ὑπήκουσε πρὸς τὰς διαλύσεις . . . ‘And the king who had long been searching for a solution of the question . . . gladly consented to an accommodation . . .’.

⁵⁷ For the negotiations, see ch. 1.3. It is clear that Seleukid contact with India evoked the Indian campaign of Seleukos I: Mehl 1986: 170–86 and now Kosmin 2014: 32–7. If Antiochos III indeed ventured with his army towards India beyond Kabul before heading south-west (Pol. 11. 34. 13), it is plausible that he followed the Khyber

Seleukid monarch to have acknowledged a Baktrian ruler with the title of king.⁵⁸ Nevertheless, while both the literary and numismatic evidence regarding third-century Baktria is difficult to interpret, the quasi-independent position of the Baktrian ruler was not a novel development in the region.

The surviving ancient literary accounts link the ascent of the Baktrian dynasty inseparably with the war between Antiochos Hierax and Seleukos II in the middle of the third century BCE. According to the reworked version of Pompeius Trogus' *Philippic History* by the imperial author Justin, it was during the Brothers' War in Asia that both Theodotos (whom we should identify as Diodotos), 'the governor of the thousand cities of Baktria', and the Parthians revolted (*defecit*). For Justin, Diodotos also made himself king at this time (*Epit.* 41. 4. 3–5).⁵⁹ Arsakes invaded Parthia and overthrew Andragoras, the commander of Seleukos II, and took the government for himself (Just. *Epit.* 41. 4. 6–7). Justin is not interested in chronological precision and historical origin, and this is reflected in his narrative. Instead, events in Asia Minor and the East were reported to have occurred 'at the same time' (*eodem tempore*) or 'around this time' (*eo tempore*), a device that served to underline the author's interest in the causal link between the weakness of the Seleukid kings on the one hand, which resulted from their moral failings, and local secession on the other.⁶⁰ Additionally, later Parthian foundation myths created two different accounts of the origins of Arsakes, the founder of the Parthian empire.⁶¹ While the debate regarding the Parthian and Baktrian secession has received a considerable amount of scholarly attention, with a recent tendency to favour a lower date after the

Pass towards modern Jalalabad and Peshawar. For the routes (which were also taken by the East India Company during their invasion and flight in 1839–42): Dalrymple 2013.

⁵⁸ Note, however, the possibility of Seleukos II accepting the kingships of Attalos I and Diodotos II, see ch. 2.1b.

⁵⁹ For a recent assessment: Coloru 2009: esp. 157–72; Lerner 1999: 13–19; Holt 1999: 55–66. On the thousand cities: Leriche 2007; see also Coloru 2009: 169 n. 58.

⁶⁰ The moral reasoning is explicit in Just. *Epit.* 27. 1. 3, 27. 2. 7–8 and 27. 3. 11–12; see also Holt 1999: 60. It is impossible to determine whether this was already part of the narrative of Pompeius Trogus: Pomp. Trog. 27 does not follow this argument, but the passage might be too brief to draw conclusions.

⁶¹ On the plurality of foundation myths of the Parthian dynasty: Hauser 2005: esp. 174–8.

death of Antiochos II,⁶² the nature of the literary evidence dictates that not too much weight is attached to Justin's causal links, and thus the precise choreography of the regions' secessions must remain unclear.

Nevertheless, certain themes and elements are instructive for an assessment of the relationship between the Seleukid kings and the Baktrian dynasts, and are therefore worthy of discussion: Justin's narrative on the subject seems clear: while Seleukos II was fighting his brother in the western parts of the empire, the Seleukid satraps of Parthyene and Baktria seceded. At some point after Andragoras' secession, Arsakes invaded Parthia, and the Seleukid satrap was murdered. Strabo's account suggested similar dynamics, even though in his account it was Baktria that revolted first:

But when revolts were attempted in those areas outside the Tauros, because of the fact that the kings of Syria and Media were busily engaged with other affairs, the ones entrusted (those around Euthydemos) first caused Baktriane to revolt and all the places near it. Then Arsakes, a Skythian, with some of the Däae...invaded Parthia and conquered it.⁶³

Although Strabo presumably confused the name of Euthydemos with that of Diodotos,⁶⁴ both Justin and Strabo place the secession at a time when the Seleukid kings (*τῆς Συρίας καὶ τῆς Μηδίας βασιλεῖς*) were engaged in other affairs.

⁶² For a recent analysis following the low dating: Coloru 2009: 157–68; further references: Schmitt 1964: 64–75; Assar 2004. This 'lower' chronology by Bevan 1902: I 285–6 was championed by Wolski (e.g. 1993 and Wolski 1999) and in particular, Will 1979: 301–8. For Wolski's extensive treatment of the topic see his bibliography in *Parthica* 7 2005. The 'high' chronology of the Baktrian secession during the reign of Antiochos II was favoured by e.g. Bickerman 1944: 79–83; Narain 1957. Note also the discussion in Altheim and Stiehl 1970: 443–67; Bivar 1983: 28–30; Musti 1984: 213–20.

⁶³ Strab. 11. 9. 2: *Νεωτερισθέντων δὲ τῶν ἔξω τοῦ Ταύρου διὰ τὸ πρὸς ἄλλοις εἶναι τοὺς τῆς Συρίας καὶ τῆς Μηδίας βασιλέας τοὺς ἔχοντας καὶ ταῦτα, πρῶτον μὲν τὴν Βακτριανὴν ἀπέστησαν οἱ πεπιστευμένοι καὶ τὴν ἐγγὺς αὐτῆς πᾶσαν, οἱ περὶ Εὐθύδημον. ἔπειτ' Ἀρσάκης ἀνὴρ Σκύθης τῶν Δαῶν τινας ἔχων [...] ἐπῆλθεν ἐπὶ τὴν Παρθυαίαν καὶ ἐκράτησεν αὐτῆς*; Coloru 2009: 161 follows this order of events; see also Brodersen 1986: 380; Drijvers 1998: 284; Will 1979: 305–6.

⁶⁴ Altheim's suggestion that these events refer to the revolt of Molon is unconvincing, as demonstrated by Schmitt 1964: 70 n. 1; see also Coloru 2009: 163; *contra* Altheim 1947: 291; followed by Will 1962: 106; Will 1979: 305; Lerner 1999: 40–1; cf. Wolski 1999: 45–50.

This picture is enriched, yet complicated, by coinage dating to the period. During the reign of Antiochos II there was a change to the Seleukid coinage in Baktria.⁶⁵ The portrait of the Seleukid ruler, which until then had been on the obverse of Baktrian coinage, was replaced with a different portrait, generally accepted as the portrait of Diodotos I.⁶⁶ Moreover, the usual Apollo on Omphalos type on the reverse of the coinage was replaced with a Zeus holding an aegis and wielding a thunderbolt. The coins were issued in the name of βασιλεὺς Ἀντίοχος, 'King Antiochos' (Fig. 1.4). Additional issues with a different portrait were minted later with a similar reverse and the royal Seleukid legend. This younger portrait has usually been identified as the son of Diodotos I, the future Diodotos II (Fig. 1.5).⁶⁷

The coinage was struck at two mints that were not connected with the Seleukid mints in the region, and B. Kritt has tentatively identified one of them with the city of Baktra (mint B), which seems to have continued its mint activity during the siege of Antiochos III.⁶⁸ The second portrait also continued to be struck on the obverse of the coins when the coinage reached yet another stage in the minting process. At some point, the same obverse die was used in connection with a reverse die with a new legend bearing the title βασιλεὺς Διόδωτος 'King Diodotos'.⁶⁹ It appears that mint A issued a commemorative

⁶⁵ Holt dates them provisionally between 255 and 250, although these dates can only be estimates: Holt 1999: 97; Kritt 2001: 7–34. For a similar sequence: Bopearachchi 1991: 41–5. Coloru 2009: 168 places it after the death of Antiochos II. Lerner 1999: 92–101 interprets one of the forgeries classified as such in Jenkins 1965 as real.

⁶⁶ Recently J. Jakobsson 2010 (accepted by Wenghofer forthcoming) has introduced a third Diodotid ruler, Antiochos Nikatör. His reconstruction illustrates the many uncertainties that remain with regard to Baktrian coinage; doubts remain.

⁶⁷ The 'younger' portrait tries to be distinct from the 'older' portrait. However, it should be added that only one issue of Antiochos II from Ai Khanoum has been identified, and thus it is not impossible to question whether the 'younger' portrait is in fact a portrait of 'a' Seleukid king. Although it is certain that the Seleukid kings created distinct royal images, the Baktrian coinage might be a local interpretation of the 'official' image: see Bopearachchi 1991: Series 11, p. 151; followed by Lerner 1999: 102–3 who interpreted this series as belonging to Antiochos II; cf. Jakobsson 2010: 31. Since the 'younger' image continues to be used in the period of Diodotid minting, however, a Seleukid version seems unlikely (see Holt's series E and F). Although the definitive decision about the 'young' and the 'old' portrait remains far from certain, Holt's reconstruction of the co-regency is so far the most plausible: Holt 1999: 91–8.

⁶⁸ Kritt 2001: 98–102.

⁶⁹ Holt's groups D1–8 and F1–8; F3 is obverse die-linked with the issue E9 (Holt 1999: 91–2); Kritt 2001: 8–12.



Fig. 1.4 Tetradrachm of Diodotos I, mint Baktra, mid-C3 BCE, ANS 1995.51.50. Kritt 2001: pl. 2 A6 (2). Courtesy of the American Numismatic Society.



Fig. 1.5 Stater of Diodotos II, mint Baktra, mid-C3 BCE, ANS 1995.51.46. Kritt 2001: pl. 6 D1. Courtesy of the American Numismatic Society.

issue later during Diodotos II's reign which also described Diodotos I with the title of king.⁷⁰ In the following period both mints also minted coinage for Euthydemos after he usurped the kingship from Diodotos II.⁷¹

Scholarship has stressed that the coinage of the Diodotids reflects a gradual secession from the Seleukids with the introduction of new imagery and symbols.⁷² Yet we should also examine the Baktrian coinage in the light of the recent discoveries regarding local coinages.⁷³ The transition of minting coinage between Antiochos II and the Diodotid rulers should be interpreted as a change in local

⁷⁰ Holt 1999: 103; for Jakobsson 2010: 26–7 this would be the first series of Diodotos I.

⁷¹ Kritt 2001: 88–98. For his accession: Pol. 11. 34. 1–2, and ch. 1.3.

⁷² See Tarn 1997: 72–3; Bengtson 1944: 54; Capdetrey 2007: 124; *contra*: Jakobsson 2010: 24.

⁷³ Noted by Coloru 2009: 165; Holt 1999: 99.



Fig. 1.6 Stater of Andragoras, uncertain mint, mid-C3 BCE, BM 1879. 0401. 2. © The Trustees of the British Museum.

administration, and not necessarily as the slow build-up to secession. As with the example from Pergamon, it is impossible to determine whether Seleukid authorities granted local coinage, or if the satrap Diodotos took the liberty himself. It is possible that in both cases the local coinage was a response to external pressure (perhaps as indicated in the *topos* of Euthydemos' plea to Antiochos III, which will be discussed below). If O. Coloru's plausible interpretation of a strong late reign of Antiochos II is accepted,⁷⁴ it could be argued that it was indeed the strong political position of the king that allowed him to grant coinages to local power-holders in order to fulfil local administrative responsibilities. The coinage of the satrap Andragoras could be explained in a similar manner. If indeed the Parthian satrap minted coinage, he issued two types: one with Greek and one with Aramaic legends. One type shows a portrait wearing a diadem on the obverse, and a chariot on the reverse (Fig. 1.6). The reverse also contains the name *Ἀνδραγόρας* in the genitive. The second type shows the portrayed with a *bashlik* and the obverse carries the inscription *נרנר*, which the editors interpret as an abbreviated rendering of Andragoras' name in Aramaic. The reverse bears the inscription *וחדש*, the name of the Iranian water deity Vaxšu/Vaxšuvār (Fig. 1.7).⁷⁵ Both the presence of the *bashlik* and the absence

⁷⁴ Coloru 2009: 165–6. Plischke 2014: 221–3 also argues for a strong reign.

⁷⁵ Diakonoff and Zejmal 1988; I am grateful to G. Kantor (Oxford) for helping me with this article; see also Wolski 1975; Lerner 1999: 23–4. Recently, Coloru 2009: 158 has suggested that this coinage should represent the first Parthian issues rather than Andragoras' own coinage. Coinage in the name of a deposed satrap, however, seems unlikely. Instead, I would argue that Andragoras offered a localized version of his rule



Fig. 1.7 'Aramaic' Coinage of Andragoras, uncertain mint, mid-C3 BCE, Diakonoff and Zejmal 1988: pl. no. 3.1. Courtesy of VDI.

of any royal title support the hypothesis that the coinage had a local character.⁷⁶ Considering the liberties of the local power-holders of Anatolia and the minting of coinage under Philetairos and the *frataraka*,⁷⁷ it is attractive, and, as I argue, necessary, to interpret the local coinages of the East as part of the same phenomenon: as privileges of local power. The patterns of local coinage do not indicate secession from the central Seleukid rule, but rather they were a means to fulfil administrative, and perhaps even representative, functions in peripheral regions; regions where the king was absent.

Does this reinterpretation of the coinage influence our understanding of the dynamics of the Diodotid secession as well as the relationship between the Seleukid kings and their most eastern satraps? If the granting (or acceptance) of local coinage was not a sign of political rupture, it becomes even more difficult to ascertain when Diodotos I would have started to mint coinage with a different portrait and reverse style. The relatively small volume of coinage under Antiochos II

that could be attractive to his audiences. For dynasts of regions with marked cultural difference: see also Chrubasik forthcoming b.

⁷⁶ *Bashlik*: Borchhardt 1999: esp. 59–69; Zahle 1982; also Holt 1999: 63. Andragoras wears the diadem, which also for Jakobsson 2010: 24 was a prerogative for kingship. In light of the recent studies on the Attalids, this tenet ought to be questioned.

⁷⁷ See nn. 13 and 47. Also, the coinage of Sophytos does not necessarily have to be treated as independent coinage: Plischke 2014: 176–7. For Sophytos: Bernard 1985: 21–35 and Coloru 2009: 139–42 with further references.

in Baktria should suggest that Diodotos I's coinage began during this Seleukid king's reign.⁷⁸ F. Holt has convincingly argued that it was following the accession of Diodotos II that the Baktrian ruler adopted the royal title on his coinage.⁷⁹ If this interpretation is correct, and if we can place any emphasis on Justin's account, we should see Diodotos II's accession, and his alliance with the Parthian ruler, as a benchmark of events in the East (Just. *Epit.* 41. 4. 9–10).

Thus, the following tentative scenario can be reconstructed. At some point during the later period of Antiochos II's reign, the Seleukid satraps Andragoras and Diodotos minted coinage in their own name in their satrapies. They fulfilled local functions and acted relatively independently. Justin indicates that Andragoras seceded, following the accession of Seleukos II and the Third Syrian War, and perhaps this was a response to early Parthian intrusions.⁸⁰ Similarly, it may have been the Parthian uprising that persuaded Diodotos of Baktria to exert more independence. Moreover, he made his son co-regent in order to maintain stability in his satrapy and ensure a peaceful succession after his death.⁸¹ Although it does not have to be an indicator of independence, it perhaps was this reaction to the events in Parthia that made its way into Justin's narrative as the revolt of Baktria (*Epit.* 41. 4. 5).⁸² While Seleukos II was engaged in other affairs after his defeat by Galatian tribes (possibly at Ankyra), the Parni under Arsakes invaded Parthia, overcame Andragoras, and established themselves in the region (Just. *Epit.* 41. 4. 6–7). If Diodotos I had not already broken with the Seleukid king, it was perhaps now that Seleukos II granted further concessions to the Baktrian dynast, which might be reflected in Justin's account when he writes that Arsakes was in fear of both Diodotos I and Seleukos II

⁷⁸ While it is possible that Diodotos I continued to mint in the name of Antiochos II after the accession of Seleukos II, this seems hardly plausible, particularly since the Pergamene coins which Holt (1999: 101 n. 34) adduces for his argument have since been redated: see Meadows 2013a: 156; note Lerner 1999: 21–2.

⁷⁹ Holt 1999: 103.

⁸⁰ See Coloru 2009: 159–63; Wolski 1975: 161; cf. Lerner 1999: 25–6. For local pressures: Capdetrey 2007: 129.

⁸¹ Although presumably a private dedication, the inscription mentioning King Euthydemos and his son (*SEG* 54. 1569) could suggest a strong connection between father and son under Euthydemos' rule. This perhaps is also reflected in the coinage of the Diodotid rulers: cf. Coloru 2009: 186.

⁸² For the interpretation that Diodotos did not make himself king: Holt 1999: 100; *contra*: Lerner 1999: 99–103.

(*Epit.* 41. 4. 8).⁸³ Diodotos I perhaps still functioned as a Seleukid agent in the region despite his strong local status.

After the accession of Diodotos II, the political situation might have changed. The Baktrian ruler took the diadem in a final attempt to uphold regional power.⁸⁴ It is impossible to determine whether the kingship was simply seized or whether the Seleukid king had granted it, but possibly in order to avoid continuous border conflict between the Parthians and his own territories, Diodotos II made an alliance and a peace treaty with Arsakes (*foedus ac pacem fecit*, Just. *Epit.* 41. 4. 9). If we follow Justin in this account, Diodotos II apparently saw the need or opportunity to ally himself with the neighbouring ruler, who presumably opposed Seleukid politics, and he, too, might have broken with the Seleukid centre. It remains inconclusive, however, whether we should place this change in allegiance in the context of growing Seleukid strength and Seleukid demands.⁸⁵ The advantage of this treaty seems to have been primarily for the Parthians: while Seleukos II initially had been able to force Arsakes to flee (Strab. 11. 8. 8), perhaps it was the Parthian–Baktrian alliance that later enabled Arsakes to focus his attention to the West, and to defeat Seleukos II in battle. In the end, this is speculative. For the Seleukid king—at least if we follow Justin’s narrative—the western parts of the empire were more pressing; Seleukos II could not retaliate against Arsakes, but was recalled to the western parts of his empire (Just. *Epit.* 41. 4. 9–5. 1).

The following period of Seleukid politics hindered the reaffirmation of Seleukid control in its peripheral regions, and both Attalos I of Pergamon and the Baktrian rulers continued to act as independent kings. For Baktria there is no evidence for the politics of this period. Coloru’s proposal of internal opposition to the Diodotid rulers is attractive, yet remains uncertain.⁸⁶ At some point between

⁸³ See also Holt’s suggestion of a victory issue of Diodotos I: Holt 1999: 97–9; Jakobsson 2010: 31–2.

⁸⁴ Capdetrey 2007: 130. For the ‘essentially opportunistic’ point of view: Billows 1995: 108–9.

⁸⁵ Coloru 2009: 173–4; Lerner 1999: 33–43; Will 1979: 308–13; Kuhrt and Sherwin-White 1993: 89. Lerner’s interpretation of Seleukos II’s Parthian imprisonment, based on Poseidonius (EK F64), is rejected here. It also conflicts with Just. *Epit.* 41. 5. 1; Lerner 1999: 35–6.

⁸⁶ Coloru 2009: 173.

c.230 and c.225, Euthydemos gained power in Baktria, destroyed his predecessors (Pol. 11. 34. 1–2), and took the diadem.⁸⁷

Diodotos I and Diodotos II's political spheres indeed slowly slipped from Seleukid control; however, this was not atypical in the Seleukid kingdom. It was part of the nature of local power-holders that they would fill the political vacuum in times when the kings seemed far away, and when perhaps the internal and external pressures on these local agents increased. Seleukid authorities were aware of this. The secession of Andragoras and the Baktrians was not the only case, and the coinage of the Diodotid rulers should not be connected with their secession, but rather with attempts to uphold regional power.⁸⁸ Euthydemos had taken the position of one of those peripheral regional power-holders, and the Seleukid king treated Euthydemos as such. Antiochos III acknowledged local power-holders as long as they submitted to his conditions, and the Seleukid campaigns in Atropatene, while in a non-Seleukid space, provide a further example of this (Pol. 5. 55. 1–10). We are not able to ascertain whether the Seleukid king wanted to exchange Euthydemos with a candidate of his own choice, nevertheless it is very plausible that all the Seleukid king wanted from Euthydemos was recognition of the superiority of the Seleukid king, regular tribute payments, and the region kept under control. Although Euthydemos initially decided to defend his territories as king of Baktria, after a two-year siege he accepted nominal Seleukid sovereignty.

Regardless of the many uncertainties and tentative suggestions generated by the evidence, the Baktrian episode, interpreted in the context of the Seleukid kings' reactions to other peripheral rulers, demonstrates that the Seleukid kings accepted, and perhaps even fostered, the presence of local power-holders.

1.1c Dynasts beyond the Third Century

The emergence of local dynasts, their secession, and the Seleukid reaction to them is further demonstrated in the history of the second

⁸⁷ For the date: Coloru 2009: 172–3; see also Bopearachchi 1991: 47–9; Holt 1999: 25 and 106. Overstrikes of Euthydemos over Diodotid coinage: Bopearachchi 2008: 255. On the continuity of mint magistrates: Holt 1999: 104–5; Kritt 2001: 89.

⁸⁸ See now independently D. Engels 2013: 51 who compares the dynasts of the Persis' right to coinage with that of the communities of the second-century Levant.

century, and most explicitly in the relationship between the Seleukid kings and the elites of the temple state of Jerusalem. Antiochos III granted 'all the members of the nation (of the Jews) a form of government in accordance with their ancestral laws',⁸⁹ and the many attempts of subsequent kings to further the Seleukid relationship with several groups in Jerusalem will be outlined in chapter 3. However, it was Demetrios II's attempt to grant the Makkabees local independence that is strikingly similar to Seleukid practices in the third century. In the mid-second century, in the context of his dispute with the usurper Tryphon, Demetrios II wrote a letter 'to Simon the high priest and Friend of the kings and to the Elders of the people of Judaea'.⁹⁰ He released them from contributions and taxes, granted them their fortresses in Judaea, acquitted (*ἀφίημι*) them from their wrongdoings (*ἀγνοήματα*) and faults (*ἀμαρτήματα*; 1 Makk. 13. 36–40), and thus implicitly gave up his own garrison stationed in the *akra* at Jerusalem. The author of 1 Makkabees celebrates in his narrative that it was from this point onwards, in the year 170 of the Seleukid era (probably in early June 142), that 'the yoke of the infidels was taken from Israel'.⁹¹ While we must bear in mind the limitations of Seleukid authority over the Makkabees in this period, and thus the persuasiveness of Seleukid royal discourse,⁹² this celebrated proclamation, so important for the narrative of 1 Makkabees, was not irreversible. After the death of the usurper Tryphon, Antiochos VII re-exerted royal influence over Judaea in the later 130s.⁹³ The Seleukid king had besieged Jerusalem, and while he did not insist on taking the city, he reaffirmed Seleukid rule. Of course the people of Judaea were still independent; nevertheless, John Hyrkanos apparently started to mint money in the name of the Seleukid king (SC 2123), and, most importantly, the Makkabaeen high priest supported Antiochos VII with troops in a campaign against the Parthians in an attempt to

⁸⁹ Jos. Ant. 12. 142: *πολιτευέσθωσαν δὲ πάντες οἱ ἐκ τοῦ ἔθνους κατὰ τοὺς πατρίους νόμους* . . .

⁹⁰ 1 Makk. 13. 36: *Βασιλεὺς Δημήτριος Σίμωνι ἀρχιερεῖ καὶ φίλῳ βασιλέων καὶ πρεσβυτέροις καὶ ἔθνει Ἰουδαίων χαίρειν*.

⁹¹ Date: 1 Makk. 13. 41: . . . ἡρθη ὁ ζυγὸς τῶν ἐθνῶν ἀπὸ τοῦ Ἰσραήλ; note also Jos. Ant. 13. 213. For the date, see Schürer 1973: 192 n. 10; *contra* Ehling 2008: 177 who follows Schürer 1901: 247 n. 14. For the 'limits' of this independence: Fischer 1991: 37–8.

⁹² Ma 2000b.

⁹³ On this relationship, see ch. 3.3b.

reconquer Seleukid Babylonia (Jos. *Ant.* 13, 249).⁹⁴ J. K. Davies has argued for the ambivalence of legalistic approaches to concepts of independence and sovereignty,⁹⁵ and this is what is at issue here. While 1–2 Makkabees and the later historian Josephus create a picture of the success of the emerging Hasmonean house, it is nevertheless apparent that the Makkabees fulfilled a very similar role to their ‘Hellenizing’ predecessors: their position against the Seleukid kings was more powerful than that of the previous high priests, yet they continued to retain some sort of relationship with the Seleukid kings.⁹⁶ Also, their position within Jerusalem was not as stable as the narratives of 1–2 Makkabees suggest.⁹⁷

Local dynasts and local power-holders were present throughout the empire, and throughout the period of the existence of the Seleukid state. The Attalids in Pergamon, the Philomelids in Phrygia, the Diodotids in Baktria, the rulers of Armenia, the rulers of the Persis, local Arabian sheikhs, and priestly dynasts, such as the high priests of Jerusalem and the Teukrids of Uzunçaburc in Rough Kilikia, are all a structural element in the exercise of Seleukid control.⁹⁸ These local rulers differed considerably regarding their influence, and while it seems initially at odds to compare the rulers of Pergamon, powerful commanders over large armies and generous benefactors, to the local Arabian sheikhs of the second century, who presumably did not control more than a valley or an oasis (e.g. Diod. Sic. 33. 4a), the difference really was only one of their respective sizes; in terms of structure, they fulfilled the same administrative purpose in peripheral regions.

This section has roughly sketched the presence of local power-holders within—and as a crucial part of—the landscape of the Seleukid empire. It is now necessary to consider the reasons for their presence. In part they were remnants of former empires, creations of temporal weakness in certain regions, and pockets of independent power that were too costly or too labour-intensive to remove. Beyond their traditional or accidental origins, however, they also fulfilled specific functions.

⁹⁴ For the transfer from Seleukid to Judaeen coinage: Hoover 2003.

⁹⁵ Davies 2002: 7–8 and 12.

⁹⁶ On this question, see explicitly Chrubasik forthcoming a and Chrubasik forthcoming b.

⁹⁷ See ch. 3.3b.

⁹⁸ On priest-dynasts and their position: Chrubasik forthcoming b.

1.2 THE STRENGTH OF LOCAL POWER

Local power was advantageous to the Seleukid kings: it offered protection and substantial support to communities within close proximity, it provided an addressee of royal communication, and it eased Seleukid administration. Yet local power was also volatile, potentially unruly, and therefore dangerous. I will argue in the following, however, that it is in Polybios' account of the Baktrian adventure of Antiochos III (Pol. 11. 34. 1–10) that we can trace some form of official Seleukid thought regarding the advantages of local dynasts. In this fragment and the other passages of the eastern campaigns, Polybios depicted the Seleukid king in an exceedingly positive light. By considering the positive tone of Polybios' narrative, and also the possible sources that would have had detailed knowledge about these campaigns, it becomes very probable that Polybios followed the characterization of a Seleukid source.⁹⁹ This claim can be somewhat quantified with the language Polybios uses: for example, in Pol. 11. 34. 9, Antiochos III 'conceded the royal name', expressed through the use of *συγχωρέω*; a choice of verb, which could have easily been changed by Polybios to give a twist to the narrative if he so wished, but which in this instance fits the language of the Seleukid court. This is not to say that the fragmentary passages of Polybios enable an insight into a 'real' Seleukid–Baktrian discourse, but the reworked transmission of material that originated in the Seleukid empire appears clear.

In Polybios' fragment both Euthydemos' rationale and the Seleukid response are interesting:

For Euthydemos himself was a native of Magnesia, and he now, in defending himself to Teleas, said that Antiochos was not justified in attempting to drive him out of his kingdom, as he himself had never revolted from the king, but after others had revolted he had destroyed their descendants and had possessed himself of the sovereignty of the Baktrians.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ Primo 2009: 133–5; accepted by Kosmin 2014: 66 n. 49.

¹⁰⁰ Pol. 11. 34. 1–2: *Καὶ γὰρ αὐτὸς ἦν ὁ Εὐθύδημος Μάγνης, πρὸς ὃν ἀπελογίζετο φάσκων ὡς οὐ δικαίως αὐτὸν Ἀντίοχος ἐκ τῆς βασιλείας ἐκβαλεῖν σπουδάζει· γεγονέναι γὰρ οὐκ αὐτὸς ἀποστάτης τοῦ βασιλέως, ἀλλ' ἑτέρων ἀποστάντων ἐπανελόμενος τοὺς ἐκείνων ἐκγόνους, οὕτως κρατῆσαι τῆς Βακτριανῶν ἀρχῆς.*

Euthydemos then added that the Seleukid king should not begrudge him of τῆς ὀνομασίας τῆς τοῦ βασιλέως καὶ προστασίας ‘his royal name and status’ (Pol. 11. 34. 3), since this safeguarded both rulers against the nomads (Pol. 11. 34. 5). Two elements are of particular importance in this account: first, Euthydemos did not revolt against the king, and it was he who had punished those who had seceded. Second, the position of a strong figure in a defined region of ‘the Baktrians’ supported the Seleukid interest in the security of the χώρα, ‘the land’. As in the western parts of his empire,¹⁰¹ Antiochos III had presumably arrived in central Asia laying claims to his ancestral dominions. Beyond verbal land claims, Antiochos III’s actions also spoke for themselves: even if Euthydemos was not aware of the fate of Achaïos and the relationship between Antiochos III and Attalos I, he had surely received information regarding the crushed revolt of Molon, the subjugation of Artabazanes of Atropatene (Pol. 5. 55), the reaffirmation of Xerxes of Armenia under Seleukid authority (Pol. 8. 23), and the Seleukid king’s recent arrangement with the Parthian ruler (Just. *Epit.* 41. 5. 7).

It was in the context of a Seleukid reconquest that apparently Euthydemos emphasized the Baktrians’ need for a ‘king’ in these far regions in order to guarantee the security of the kingdom. This response by the Baktrian king fits too well into this image of Seleukid control to be a Polybian construct.¹⁰² The narrative further underlined that the Baktrian ruler was helpful to the Seleukid kings, since he had destroyed (ἐπανελόμενος) those who had revolted against the king, thus distancing himself from his predecessors.¹⁰³ Euthydemos had become king by his own authority, he could perform the duties that were needed for the safety of Baktria, and thus Antiochos III should acknowledge his position.

¹⁰¹ Ma 2002: 27–33, esp. 29–30.

¹⁰² Although it is uncertain to which degree the ‘nomads’ from the steppe were a real threat or later insertion in the Polybian narrative, P. Kosmin has convincingly argued that the emphasis on the barbarian invasion seems to echo Seleukid ideology: Kosmin 2014: 66–7. It thus should precede Polybios’ narrative. Coloru 2009: 181–2 underlines the likelihood of a nomad threat while not excluding the possibility of a Polybian insertion; see also Cataudella 2006. For the ‘destruction’ of Aï Khanoum, see now Martinez-Sève 2014: 271–2.

¹⁰³ It remains unclear whether this referred to an internal Baktrian discourse against the Diodotids, as suggested by Coloru 2009: 173.

Beyond Euthydemos' account, however, the Seleukid response is striking: as narrated in chapter 1.2, Antiochos III accepted and received Euthydemos' son to ratify the treaty under oath. Polybios writes that the latter made a good and royal impression on him (Pol. 11. 34. 7–9). Additionally:

First he [Antiochos III] promised to give him one of his daughters in marriage and secondly, he conceded to his father the royal name. After making a written treaty concerning other points and entering into a sworn alliance, Antiochos took his departure, serving out two generous rations of corn to his troops and adding to his own the elephants belonging to Euthydemos.¹⁰⁴

It has been argued that the limits of Seleukid success are too obvious: Euthydemos did not leave his stronghold, the Seleukid king gave up on what he had aimed to conquer, and he was forced to make a treaty.¹⁰⁵ Antiochos III likely had no other option but to accept the monarch if he did not want to continue the siege. Also, in the end it is impossible to ascertain whether the acceptance of Euthydemos as king derived from the long siege of Baktra, or if the siege served to illustrate the possibilities of Seleukid power, and to force the Baktrian ruler to bow to Seleukid authority.¹⁰⁶ Nevertheless, this line of argument misrepresents the character of Polybios' passage, and thus misses the point. If we accept that this passage is based on a narrative that emerged directly from the Baktrian expedition, and if we further accept that Polybios subscribed to the positive image of Antiochos III

¹⁰⁴ Pol. 11. 34. 9–10: ...πρῶτον μὲν ἐπηγγέιλαιτο δώσειν αὐτῷ μίαν τῶν ἑαυτοῦ θυγατέρων· δεύτερον δὲ συνεχώρησε τῷ πατρὶ τὸ τῆς βασιλείας ὄνομα. περὶ δὲ τῶν λοιπῶν ἐγγράπτους ποιησάμενος ὁμολογίας καὶ συμμαχίαν ἔνορκον, ἀνέζευξε σιτομετρίας δαφιλῶς τὴν δύναμιν, προσλαβὼν καὶ τοὺς ὑπάρχοντας ἐλέφαντας τοῖς περὶ τὸν Εὐθύδημον.

¹⁰⁵ e.g. Will 1982: 58–9; see also Tarn 1997: 82 and Davies 2002: 7. Note Kuhrt and Sherwin-White 1993: 199 and Coloru 2009: 183–5. D. Engels 2011: 33–4 is misguided. Kosmin 2014: 121 sees this treaty similar to the withdrawal from Asia Minor in 188. His interpretation seems to rest on the loss of Baktria in the later years, but—as I argue in the following—the passage appears to have a different connotation.

¹⁰⁶ On Seleukid power in Baktria: if the interpretations in Kriti 2001: 152–8 are correct, then Antiochos III was able to occupy Ai Khanoum during his campaign and mint coinage (SC 1283–4), thus underlining Antiochos III's impact in the region. Leriche 1986: 54–5 and 67–70 has argued that the layer of rebuilding at Ai Khanoum between phases IV and V, dated roughly to c.225, was so extensive that it might have been initiated beyond the local level. Also, Martinez-Sève 2014: 271 connects the presence of Megarian bowls in the city with the campaigns of Antiochos III. Cf. Kriti, Hoover, and Houghton 2000; Holt 1999: 54.

in these passages (which cannot be doubted), every element of the passage supports a story of Seleukid success. Any Seleukid court historiographer could have chosen to depict his king in a more positive light, and edit out negative elements while adhering to the relative framework of the eastern narrative. Similarly, if one were to argue that Polybios introduced elements to lessen Antiochos III's achievements, this potential criticism seems to be forgotten a few sentences later in his utter praise for the king (Pol. 11. 34. 14–16). Of course one could make a claim about irony and subtlety, but Polybios is not subtle when it comes to lashing out at kings.¹⁰⁷ This passage, therefore, and those phrases that have been deemed 'negative' for Antiochos III, must be read in the light of a story that does not leave any doubt about the achievements of the Seleukid king.

Even if the passage in its current form misrepresents historical reality to underline the successful role of the king, as a narrative it provides a positive image of Antiochos III's dealings with Euthydemos of Baktria, and as such it is instructive for understanding the Seleukid perception of local dynasts. As a Seleukid story of success, this account must have been persuasive, meaning that it was apparently advantageous to depict the Seleukid king making treaties with the sons of local dynasts. Conceding the royal title apparently did not diminish Antiochos III's position. If this is true, one could further argue that Antiochos III's own position was perhaps even enhanced by the fact that the Seleukid ruler was a king who could make others king. The successful alliance was underscored through the promise of marriage of a Seleukid princess to Demetrios.¹⁰⁸ The handing over of the elephants underlines the force of the Seleukid army and further demonstrates the upper hand of Antiochos III, and the double rations of corn prepared the troops for the coming campaign.¹⁰⁹

What, then, does this story tell us aside from Seleukid success? Baktria, at the eastern extremity of the Seleukid empire, was endowed with a wealth of natural resources (Theophr. *Hist. pl.* 8. 4. 5), precious metals and stones (Ael. *NA* 4. 27; Plin. *HN* 37. 65), horses, camels, and troops (Ael. *NA* 4. 55). Its rulers controlled the trading arteries along

¹⁰⁷ See Introduction, n. 37, and ch. 4.2. For irony in e.g. Josephus: Mason 2005.

¹⁰⁸ Perhaps one should follow Kosmin 2014: 164 in his suggestion that this passage could indicate that royal princesses were present on the *anabasis*.

¹⁰⁹ Sufficient rations of corns are frequently attested in Polybios as the measure of good commanders and might have been emphasized by the author. Also, the use of the participle is exclusively Polybian: e.g. Pol. 4. 63. 10; 5. 2. 11; 5. 80. 2; 11. 34. 12.

what would later be described as the Silk Roads, and the arrival of elephants from Baktria in Babylon can be seen as an indicator of the use of these trade routes (*AD I* 273 B rev. 31).¹¹⁰ Here, strong administration was needed. Euthydemos' argument that he was a defender against the nomads is ultimately based on geopolitics, and must go deeper than a Polybian narrative. It suggests that certain regions needed kings, and this statement apparently was not offensive, nor was it swallowed or altered by Seleukid historiography, demonstrating that dynasts in some regions of the empire were acceptable; more than acceptable, in fact. If Seleukid officials were left behind in Baktria as direct administrators, it was apparently not worth mentioning them in this context. Since the reign of Antiochos II, Baktria had strong governors who also were dynasts, and the above narrative suggests that for the Seleukid empire of the late third century, having dynasts in Baktria with the title of king who submitted to Seleukid rule was not only advantageous for the empire, it was the best solution.

1.2a Return to Asia Minor

If we move from Polybios' eastern narrative to the geopolitical context of Asia Minor, further observations on the positions of dynasts can be made. Philetairos' keep was one of the mighty fortresses of north-western Asia Minor, controlling the Kaikos valley, and it formed a focal point for the communities of the Aiolis. The origins of Philetairos' *dynasteia* are narrated in Pausanias' excursus on the life of Lysimachos, wherein the imperial author writes that the seceding Lysimachid courtier 'seized Pergamon above the Kaikos and sent a herald offering both the property and himself to Seleukos'.¹¹¹ Uncertainties regarding the narrative's origin make it difficult to place this story in its appropriate context, yet one observation is crucial: Seleukos I did not actively remove Philetairos. At the time

¹¹⁰ For the Bagram treasure as a Silk-Road treasure: see *Topoi* 11 2001, in particular Mehendale 2001 on ivory and bone; Whitehouse 2001 on the 'Roman' glass, and Pirazzoli-T'Serstevens 2001 on Chinese lacquer ware; for images: Mehendale 2008: 131–43; Cambon 2008: 145–208. See also the large output of gold coinage in Baktria, presumably connected with central Asian trade: Aperghis 2004: 219; Bickerman 1938: 214. For the city of Kampyr Tepe, a stronghold probably to protect the trade routes along the Oxus River: Bolelov 2011.

¹¹¹ Paus. 1. 10. 4... καταλαμβάνει Πέργαμον τὴν ὑπὲρ Καϊκου, πέμψας δὲ κήρυκα τὰ τε χρήματα καὶ αὐτὸν ἐδίδου Σελεύκῳ.

when Philetairos seems to have been accepted by the conquering Seleukos I, the commander of Sardeis was besieged and eventually forced to give up his city (Polyain. 4. 9. 4). Of course Philetairos might have used the death of Seleukos I and the early years of Antiochos I to consolidate a position that Seleukos I had not intended for him, and that in return his removal at a later date was too difficult. Yet the frequency of dynasts in this early period of the Seleukid empire, the described co-existence of the Attalids within Seleukid Asia Minor, the reinsertion of dynasts under Antiochos III, and the above discourse on dynasts at the turn of the third century, all clearly support the general acceptance of their positions.¹¹²

The early Attalids also offer a further view on local dynasts, and this concerns their position in the geopolitical landscape of Seleukid Asia Minor: the Attalids controlled Pergamon, not Sardeis.¹¹³ One should not reduce the acceptance of a dynast in Pergamon and the surrender of the commander of Sardeis on the eve of Kouroupedion as merely an accident. The political, and the—at least as important—symbolical value of Sardeis, the old Lydian capital and Achaimenid satrapal seat, was too great to be granted to local dynasts, and here ‘high power-holders’, that is, Seleukid friends and administrators, were placed. In this regard, Pergamon was different. The local ruler of Pergamon, looking towards the Aiolis in the West, but also to northern Mysia and Kyzikos in the north-east, could be a guardian for both these regions, a controlling agent in the difficult territory of the Anatolian hinterland, and a shield to protect the western regions. The Aiolis, and Mysia in particular, were important for supplies,¹¹⁴ but nevertheless the region was not part of the political central axis of Seleukid Asia Minor. In this regard, Pergamon was peripheral. Within their region of north-western Asia Minor, the Attalids also demonstrate the advantage of local dynasts for the Seleukid state.

Dynasts offered local protection. The power of Philetairos’ position has been emphasized in the first part of this chapter: the first Attalid ruler had military colonies and troops under his control, and the gift of 600 shields to the community of Kyme is a fine example of the

¹¹² See ch. 1.1a and b.

¹¹³ The centrality of Sardeis has recently been visualized in a map on the frequency of royal travels by Kosmin 2014: 144–5 with his map 5; see also ch. 2.1.

¹¹⁴ On the importance of Mysian manpower: Ma 2013: 65–71. For the old view on the abundance of Attalid silver mines, see, however, Meadows 2013a: 150.

dynast's role in enhancing the security of the Greek *poleis* in western Asia Minor. Attalos I's subsequent stylization as the conqueror of the Galatians, the scourge of Asia Minor,¹¹⁵ might have originated in one of the earlier Attalids' main functions to safe-keep north-western Asia Minor: they were local warlords who served local purposes. Both the arrival of the Galatians in Asia Minor (see ch. 2) and the dangers mentioned in the inscriptions of local communities clearly illustrate that the Seleukid kings were not permanently able to control the Galatian tribes from raiding the cities in western Asia Minor. Antiochos I probably fought more than one campaign against the Galatians and promoted them as a famous 'Elephant battle' for which he was honoured by some coastal communities,¹¹⁶ yet the Seleukid kings and the Seleukid administrators of Asia Minor could not focus their attention solely on the Galatian question. Instead, they needed local actors to fulfil these duties. The Philomelids around Philomelion and Lysias, living alongside the 'common road' that led from Apameia to the Kilikian Gates and vice versa,¹¹⁷ were in a similarly critical, yet peripheral, position. Their radius was local, but they could defend the roads as well as secure the area against (presumably Galatian) intruders from the north-eastern parts of the Anatolian heartland.

Proximity to local communities was important. When the people of Byzantion on the south-western tip of the Bosporos needed support in their conflict with the Rhodians in 220, they appealed to Attalos I of Pergamon and Achaïos, the new self-made king in Asia Minor (we hear of no other kings), for help (Pol. 4. 48. 1–51. 9). These two rulers were not only individuals whose spheres of influence were closest to that of the Byzantines, but also they had the means to provide aid against the Rhodian ally, Prousius of Bithynia. According to Polybios, only Achaïos could support the Byzantines, as he had forced Attalos I to withdraw back to Pergamon, and Achaïos was now

¹¹⁵ A position also to be rivalled by Prousius I of Bithynia, Pol. 5. 111. 5–6. The history of the kings of Bithynia within the sphere of western Asia Minor remains to be written. For the later period: Dmitriev 2007 and Habicht 1957a. Michels 2009 is not interested in these questions.

¹¹⁶ Coşkun 2011b: 114–17 demonstrated that we should not search for 'one' battle, and would like to place the conflict into the earlier context of the Second Syrian War; for sources: App. Syr. 65 (343); Luk. Zeux. 9. For a later date: Wörrle 1975: 62; cf. Grainger 2010: 80–1.

¹¹⁷ On the common road, now Kosmin 2014: 166–7 who draws on French 1998: 21–2 with Syme 1995: 3–23.

κρατῶν μὲν τῆς ἐπὶ τᾷδε τοῦ Ταύρου ‘master of all the country on this side of the Tauros’ (Pol. 4. 48. 3). It was apparently crucial to the Byzantines that both rulers were local and had the resources at hand to help. For the Byzantines, the fact that Achaïos had usurped Seleukid power was not an issue.¹¹⁸

1.2b The Agents on the Spot

Dynasts were not merely protectors. Section 1.1 has thoroughly demonstrated that the epigraphic evidence from western Asia Minor and Greece enables us to understand how the Attalid and the Philomelid rulers contributed greatly to communities in their respective regions; they not only provided cities with weapons, they also enhanced public life through the endowment of sanctuaries and building projects.¹¹⁹ An honorific statue for Zenophanes, the priest-dynast of the sanctuary of Zeus Olbios in Rough Kilikia given by the people of Olba and the Kannatai for his goodwill towards the community (*SEG* 26. 1451), and the dedication to King Euthydemus on an altar for Hestia in modern-day Tajikistan (*SEG* 54. 1569), should stand exemplarily for dynasts’ euergetism in other regions.

Beyond local protection, dynasts were addressees that could be called on by the royal authorities.¹²⁰ Xerxes of Armenia was the ruler over a peripheral region whose father had stopped paying taxes. Antiochos III accordingly addressed him when the Seleukid king reintegrated the region, and when he demanded a proportion of the tribute (Pol. 8. 23). Other dynasts are visibly first points of call: during the well-known episode in 2 Makkabees a Seleukid official came to Jerusalem to collect revenues, the high priest Onias III served as the agent of local control, and it was he who was addressed by the Seleukid administrator (2 Makk. 3. 8–40).¹²¹ The emphasis in 1 and 2

¹¹⁸ On this episode: see also Chrubasik 2012.

¹¹⁹ See ch. 1.1a.

¹²⁰ Davies 2002: 11–12 calls the interlocutors between kings and local communities the ‘hinges of hellenism’, and emphasizes the instability of their positions. For the Seleukid empire, it is striking, however, that while we see individuals from *poleis* in high positions in the Seleukid court (more on this in ch. 4.1a), the local agents discussed throughout this chapter were not part of the same group; still interlocutors but not members of the Hellenistic courts.

¹²¹ While 2 Makk. makes the Seleukid chancellor Heliodoros the agent of the Seleukid king, it is tempting to follow Ma 2012: 75 who suggested that the Seleukid agent collecting revenue might have been Olympiodoros, the overseer of the temples

Makkabees on the increased revenue the later high priests Jason and Menelaos promised the Seleukid king also surely reflects the importance of the high priesthood in questions of Seleukid taxation.¹²²

Dynasts also could provide more than revenues. The account of the Jewish high priest John Hyrkanos, who offered troops to Antiochos VII at a time when the people of Judaea were already independent, is instructive. Local agents could provide troops and join the Seleukid kings on campaigns. Similarly to John Hyrkanos, the Phrygian dynast Lysias fought alongside Seleukid generals against Attalos I of Pergamon, presumably as part of Seleukid retaking of Asia Minor under Seleukos III (OGIS 277). Dynasts' troops, however, were not only levied when it came to campaigns: Demetrios II used Judaeans troops to quench a revolt in Antiocheia on the Orontes (1 Makk. 11. 43–51; Jos. *Ant.* 13. 134–42). The Seleukid empire used local dynasts as prime nodes of communication with the regions under their control. Dynasts were able to administer their regions relatively independently, but they were the first port of call for regions' taxation as well as the provision of troops.

Beyond taxes and troops, the Judaeans examples demonstrate a further dimension of local power-holding deriving from their familiarity with local customs: the Judaeans high priests acted as interlocutors between the Seleukid centre and regions that were culturally quite different. Familiarity with the local region did not have to be based on religious grounds: local power-holders could be more familiar with particular political threats, with the economic problems of certain communities, and with the social and political dynamics of their respective regions, and as such be valuable to the central administration. When analysed closely, the strength of local dynasts lies in their immediate presence on the spot, and their familiarity with local customs. Of course there were other local agents: *poleis* and the other communities within the empire could protect farmsteads and territories with fortresses and troops (for only one example: e.g. *I.Priene*² 28. 15–28), guard their towers (e.g. *I.Smyrna* 516),¹²³ and could be called on by the royal

mentioned in the dossiers from Tel Maresha: SEG 57. 1838; see also the discussion in Honigman 2014: 329–43. For an introductory reinterpretation of the early reign of Seleukos IV: Chrubasik 2013: 106–14.

¹²² See Honigman 2014: 349–61.

¹²³ For fortresses: Robert, OMS VI: 648–53. The causation between fortresses and the protection of grain is explicit in e.g. *Mauerbauinschriften* no. 25 bis. On the Smyrnaean tower: drawing in GIBM 1025; see Robert, OMS III: 1410–12.

administration for support and taxation.¹²⁴ While some dynasts were acting on the same level as the cities, others controlled larger territories and were a point of contact for both local communities and the central administration, and were hubs of local strength. The Phrygian dynasts and the Attalids may have already held their positions before the Seleukid takeover. This, however, did not have to be the case. As this chapter has demonstrated, other dynasts emerged as a contingency of local control and administration. As the dynasts of the Persis had been apparently accepted by the Seleukid centre, also the Attalids were likely to be promoted in their position in north-western Asia Minor to strengthen the local region. Geopolitically, the landscape of western Asia Minor, Anatolia, the Levant, and the eastern satrapies were dotted with these hubs of control and they formed an important instrument of local stability.

1.3 BETWEEN CENTRAL AND LOCAL POWER

Dynasts' economic and military resources, as well as their standing within the region, could result in them seceding during periods when the central authority was no longer felt at the local level. Internal and external political pressures, as well as individual interests, likely accounted for dynasts' secession. Yet also here the critical question is not why dynasts seceded, but rather how they were dealt with when the Seleukid king reaffirmed control over the regions in question. I have argued in the previous section that Polybios' account of Antiochos III's Baktrian adventure can serve to demonstrate that dynasts were an important element of the Seleukid administrative plan. Antiochos III apparently accepted the kingship of both Attalos I (implicitly) and Euthydemos of Baktria (explicitly), and in return these rulers accepted at the very least a nominal Seleukid authority. Also, other dynasts, such as Xerxes of Armenia under Antiochos III (Pol. 8. 23) and Artaxias of Armenia under Antiochos IV (Diod. Sic. 31. 17a), had seceded and were forced back into the Seleukid empire. The Armenian examples in particular demonstrate that while campaigns could be fought against these power-holders, the dynasts and their families were left in their positions.

¹²⁴ For local vitality and prowess of the *polis*, see Ma 2000a.

While local resources and an absence of central control might have encouraged dynasts to secede, it was the relative size of their own resources in comparison to those of the Seleukid king that can explain why dynasts did not necessarily have to be exchanged if they temporarily ceased to adhere to the central state. The third-century career of the dynast Olympichos in Karia is instructive. We first learn about Olympichos as a Seleukid *stratēgos*.¹²⁵ In the years of Antiochos Hierax's revolt, he claimed to act in the name of the absent Seleukos II, and carved out his own *dynasteia*, presumably with the Karian city of Alinda as his fortress.¹²⁶ He gave benefactions to Rhodes in the context of the great earthquake (Pol. 5. 90. 1), and to the sanctuary at Didyma (*I.Didyma* 439).¹²⁷ His position among the kings in western Asia Minor was eternalized in the dossiers concerning a dispute between the Karian sanctuary of Labraunda and the nearby *polis* of Mylasa.¹²⁸ Olympichos makes no reference to Antiochos Hierax, and presumably acted on his own during the reign of Seleukos II. Yet when the Antigonid king Antigonos III Doson arrived in the city of Mylasa in perhaps 227 while on a *tour de guerre* in western Karia, the dynast evidently chose to immediately ally himself with the bigger power (*I.Labraunda* 7. 12–13).¹²⁹ When King Philip V, the new Antigonid ruler, wrote to the city of Mylasa in the early years of his reign, he not only mentioned Olympichos (*I.Labraunda* 5), in other letters Philip V clearly addressed him as an Antigonid agent (*I.Labraunda* 7) who acted in the Antigonid king's name

¹²⁵ *I.Labraunda* 3. 7–8; and, although fragmentary, 9. 3–5 and 1.1. On Olympichos see also the commentary in *I.Labraunda* pp. 86–96; Robert and Robert 1983: 147–50; summarized in Billows 1995: 94–6. One should at least note the lower dating of the dossier to the years after Antiochos Hierax's death in Mastrocinque 1979: 128–33.

¹²⁶ For Alinda as the fortress: Robert and Robert 1983: 147–50; *I.Labraunda* 1: p. 92.

¹²⁷ Didyma: with Habicht 1960: 160. He was also honoured by the city of (presumably) Mylasa: *SEG* 58. 1220. The lavishness of the honours could suggest continuous benefactions over a period of time, and thus perhaps stem from his years as a dynast: *ed. pr.* in Isager and Karlsson 2008.

¹²⁸ *I.Labraunda* 1–10 with *BE* 1965: no. 368 and Habicht 1972a; cf. also *BE* 1950: no. 182. Note also the discussion of the internal dynamics in Virgilio 2001, and the differing constructions in Dignas 2002: 59–66 and 95–106 as well as Chrubasik forthcoming b.

¹²⁹ See Pol. 20. 5. 11, read with Walbank, *HCP* III: 70–1; see also Pomp. Trog. 28. On Antigonos Doson's Karian Campaign: Le Bohec 1993: 327–46; Will 1979: 367–8 (and 368–71 for a discussion on the date); Walbank 1984a: 459–61. Coinage of the campaign made its way into the 'Pamphylia or Cilicia' hoard *CH* 10. 292.

(*I.Labraunda* 6). Olympichos, the former *stratēgos* of Seleukos II and later dynast of Alinda, had become a power-holder in the service of Philip V. While we know little of the political scenario surrounding these texts, the dossier nevertheless clearly demonstrates Olympichos' striking self-awareness of the precariousness of his position. He was an independent ruler in northern Karia, but his position did not enable him to resist larger powers. Olympichos was concerned about his position in Karia, and thus reverted back into the framework of a royal official. We do not know whether the Antigonid king had any interest to remove Olympichos, but the danger was there.

While the Seleukid kings were content to reaffirm local dynasts after they were reincorporated into the empire, one story concerning the grant of Armenia to a new family after the death of the dynast Xerxes is indicative of the potential threat to remove dynasts from their seats.¹³⁰ Polybios' account that Attalos I's dominion was reduced to the outskirts of Pergamon as a result of Achaïos' campaigns is possibly overly dramatized (Pol. 4. 48. 2), nevertheless, even for the power of the Attalids,¹³¹ the presence of another large army could become dangerous, indicating that for most smaller dynasts of the empire, long-standing resistance to the Seleukid army was not a viable option.

Temporary secession was part of any pre-modern empire, and due to the relative size of the dynasts in comparison to resources of the Seleukid central administration, it did not constitute a structural problem of control.¹³² The Seleukid kings hoped to avoid secession through the constant symbolical and physical presence of the central state, such as the positions of the chief administrators of the Upper Satrapies and Asia Minor (with its seat at Sardeis), and with them, contingents of the Seleukid army. The chief administrators' role was only relevant in the absence of the king, and the large campaigns of Seleukos II, Seleukos III, and Antiochos III in the eastern and western parts of the empire further underline the Seleukid kings' interest in demonstrating royal presence, and reaffirming his relationship with the groups in the empire. Beyond the presence of the central apparatus, I have suggested elsewhere that the Seleukid kings also

¹³⁰ I question whether we should credit the murder of Xerxes by the daughter of Antiochos III as a direct attempt to change the ruler of the area: Joh. Antioch. *Ap.* F75 (Mariev); cf. Schmitt 1964: 28.

¹³¹ On the Attalids and war: Ma 2013.

¹³² Capdetrey 2007: 442.

attempted to create reciprocal relationships with the smaller dynasts of the empire, and that the granting of honorific titles to local dynasts might have helped these agents to stabilize their own positions within the regions, and thus trigger an interest in the empire.¹³³

I have argued that dynasts were accepted in regions that were important, but that did not form part of the central arteries of Seleukid control. Also, the relationship between dynasts and the Seleukid king was largely dependent on the structural inequality between their own economic and military resources, and those of the Seleukid central administration. In this model, the secession of dynasts curtailed Seleukid income, but it did not endanger the Seleukid empire and the position of the Seleukid king. If, however, the resources of the Seleukid king were permanently diminished in comparison to those of local dynasts, then these local actors could destabilize the Seleukid empire. We can see such a scenario in the case of second-century Judaea. The power of the Makkabees was not necessarily a structural problem. In addition to the Makkabees' power, it was the conflict between Seleukid kings and usurpers that made the concessions to local dynasts so dangerous. Through royal grants, the Makkabees not only became a larger power player in the southern Levant, but they also used the relative weakness of the Seleukid centre to play off Seleukid kings and usurpers. In this scenario, the reaffirmation of an alliance with the formerly peripheral rulers became synonymous with control over the kings' space as a whole.¹³⁴

1.4 CONCLUSION

This short history of power in the Seleukid empire can be neither a full history of the local power-holders within the state, nor can it fully demonstrate the complex relationship between individual agents and the centre.¹³⁵ Nevertheless, this sketch gives us an insight into the structure and nature of the Seleukid state. The territory over which the Seleukid king claimed his authority was a heterogeneous entity. In addition to different ethnic bodies, the empire contained civic

¹³³ Chrubasik forthcoming b.

¹³⁴ See ch. 3.

¹³⁵ I hope to return to these questions at a later point; for an initial model: Chrubasik forthcoming b.

communities, such as Greek and non-Greek cities; sanctuaries; as well as *dynasteia*: the territories of dynasts, that ranged in scale from extended geographical regions to isolated strongholds. It is important to recognize that the Seleukid state was not static, rather it was dynamic. New power-holders could emerge, who were incorporated within the umbrella of Seleukid control. This approach to the study of local power-holders, however, also reveals that the focus of earlier scholarly discussion, which interpreted the emergence of dynasts as a tool to assess the respective weakness or strength of the Seleukid state, is misguided.

The secessions of the mid-third century do not demonstrate the weakness of the central state, nor can reaffirmations of these dynasts by a strong king and late secession of individual agents vouch for the kingdoms vitality.¹³⁶ The Seleukid empire was a weak state, but the reasons for this did not lie with the local power-holders. Dynasts were a part of the empire, and the occasional secession of individual regions was inevitable in any territorial empire, a side effect of the administrative system. In order to ensure the incorporation of these regions, the rulers had to constantly reaffirm their relationship with them, as is shown by Polybios' account of the campaigns of Antiochos III, and as will be further illustrated in the following chapters.¹³⁷ The sources describe these reaffirmations as the actions of a strong Seleukid king (if he was successful) or a weak Seleukid king (if he failed).

The Seleukid kings favoured dynasts in the peripheral regions of the empire, since, despite being politically peripheral, these regions were important.¹³⁸ Pergamon was located in north-western Asia Minor, between the Aiolis and Mysia. Daskyleion, the second satrapal seat of Achaimenid Asia Minor, appears to have played no role in the Seleukid state.¹³⁹ While the geopolitical position of Pergamon does not fully correspond with that of the satrapal capital (in particular with the latter's outlook on the Hellespont), perhaps we should see

¹³⁶ For the 'Sick man of Asia': e.g. Will 1979; Musti 1984; Wolski 1999. For a revisionist, strong Seleukid empire: Kuhrt and Sherwin-White 1993.

¹³⁷ Note the observations on the travelling king in Kosmin 2014: 142–66 and particularly 144.

¹³⁸ Capdetrey 2007: 284–6; D. Engels 2011 and D. Engels 2014a.

¹³⁹ On Achaimenid Daskyleion: e.g. Kaptan 2002; Kaptan 2010. At some point in the Hellenistic period, Daskyleion seems to have passed under the control of Kyzikos, as the magistracies in a dedication suggest: SEG 26. 1336 with the discussion of that text in Robert and Robert 1976: 231–5.

Pergamon at least partially as a strong 'second' keep in western Asia Minor. The rulers of Baktria controlled resources and the trade routes of central Asia. While of more than ideological importance to the Seleukid kings, the satrapy was nevertheless far away from the central regions, and direct administration was difficult. Here, strong power-holders would preserve regional stability for the communities, protect the trade routes, and enable tax revenues to be extracted and transferred to the western parts of the empire. The issue of securing routes was also an essential responsibility of the Phrygian dynasts from the Philomelid family, whose possessions along the fertile eastern margins of the Sultan Dağ occupied a vital section of the road that ran from western Anatolia to the Kilikian Gates. Judaea was a late addition to the Seleukid empire, and the high priests of Jerusalem were the interlocutors between the people of Judaea and the Seleukid state, familiar with their region and responsible for the collection of taxes. While 1 and 2 Makkabees construct the high priests between Onias III and Jonathan as wicked and 'un-high-priestly' (e.g. 2 Makk. 4. 13), the narratives nevertheless clearly display the basic transaction of tribute from a local region to the centre. Also, the Makkabees provided troops for the Seleukid kings. All these agents were part of a relationship with the king, and some were granted honorific titles. They were familiar with their local regions and fulfilled local purposes, and the radius of their actions was in most instances small. At times they seceded, but this did not have to be more than a temporary measure, and most could not challenge the Seleukid king once he and his army were present in the region. Even if the economic and political power of the rulers of Pergamon and Baktria was much larger than many of these dynasts, they too came to an understanding with the centre. This, after all, is what Polybios' passage on the eastern adventure of Antiochos III proclaims: the Seleukid king had reconquered the eastern parts of the empire. In some instances, he had made local rulers kings to strengthen the control of the empire, and this strength of local dynasts and even kings must have been persuasive for the narrative's intended audience.

As argued throughout this chapter, there were many forms of local dynasts and agents of local power. For the structure of the Seleukid state, however, it is crucial to note what dynasts were not: dynasts occasionally held honorific titles of the Seleukid kings, and might have been royal *philoi*, however, they were not close friends and as

such were not members of the elite of the Seleukid empire.¹⁴⁰ They did not have second homes in the royal capitals, nor did they take part in the king's council. They controlled local regions, but they were not placed in charge of regions that the Seleukid king deemed politically and economically vital, such as Phrygia and Lydia with its capital of Sardeis, the *tetrapolis* of Syria, or the regions of Babylonia and Media.

1.4a Beyond Peripheries and Local Power

This chapter discussed the peripheral regions of the empire, and the relationship between local power-holders and the central state. There were, however, also regions that were not peripheral. One recent characterization of the Seleukid empire has described the Seleukid state as 'archipelago-like',¹⁴¹ and it is these stretches of empire—the Lydian plain with Phrygia in Asia Minor, Babylonia, and Media—which, aside from the *tetrapolis* in northern Syria, created a distinct core. P. Kosmin's analysis of the frequency of royal travels to demonstrate levels of 'varying political density' further visualizes the regions' political and symbolical centrality.¹⁴² The size of the empire meant that the king was usually absent in most regions. Yet the economic and military strength of these central territories translated directly into the strength of the Seleukid kings, making them essential parts of the empire.

The powers of the administrators in these regions bears testimony to the areas' economic and military importance: Zeuxis was ὁ ἐπὶ τῶν ἐπιτάδε τοῦ Ταύρου πραγμάτων 'the one in charge of affairs on this side of the Tauros' (full title in *SEG* 36. 973. 3–5), and had his seat at Sardeis; while a certain Kleomenes was ὁ ἐπὶ τῶν ἄνω σατραπειῶν 'the one in charge of the Upper Satrapies' (*I.d'Iran et d'Asie centrale* 70).¹⁴³ These Seleukid administrators and commanders were 'high power-holders': they directed contingents of the Seleukid army, they had control over the treasures of Sardeis and the Hermos valley, the Seleukid

¹⁴⁰ Cf. Davies 2002: 11–12; see also n. 120.

¹⁴¹ Capdetrey 2008: 65. Note Musti 1984: 181.

¹⁴² Kosmin 2014: 147 with map 5 on 145. Needless to say, the author is explicit about the limitations of this form of representation (p. 144). While I am not certain about his model of the travelling king, the map clearly indicates the central nodes of the empire.

¹⁴³ On this document, see also ch. 3.1b, n. 32.

military settlements, and in the Upper Satrapies they controlled the wealth of Media and the Zagros mountains.

The social origin of those who held these posts can be read as a further testimony of the king's concerns: sons of kings and brothers of kings.¹⁴⁴ If not royal princes, the commanders of these regions were the friends, and sometimes even the relatives of current and former kings, and thus members of the ruling elite of the Seleukid state. The fact that these commanders in Asia Minor and the eastern satrapies would—like their Baktrian counterparts—aim to turn their offices into dynastic principalities might not be unusual, and was perhaps even to be expected. Yet the resources these commanders controlled could at least question, if not rival, the Seleukid economic and military superiority within the empire, and thereby disturb and diminish the necessary economic and military inequality between the Seleukid king and the other agents. The secession of these 'high power-holders' in critical areas was of a different quality than the secession of Seleukid dynasts.¹⁴⁵ They posed a direct threat to the position of the Seleukid king, and thus they were declared usurpers.

¹⁴⁴ On the co-kingship of Antiochos I: Capdetrey 2007: 79–84; Chrubasik forthcoming c.

¹⁴⁵ Kosmin 2014: 242 downplays these revolts.

Usurpers in Asia Minor

The Third Century

How should one write a third-century history of usurpers? We know that both Antiochos Hierax and Achaïos were placed in charge of Asia Minor, and in due course each proclaimed himself king. We can deduce that Ptolemaic expansion in western Asia Minor and the increasing independence of the Attalids weakened the newly established Seleukid control under Antiochos II. This statement, however, includes paradigms that are more complicated than the previous sentence can convey: what do 'Ptolemaic expansion' and 'increasing Attalid independence' mean? While the latter question has already been addressed in chapter 1, in order to think about third-century Asia Minor, we must pay attention to the complexities of the region and the limitations of our sources. The sources in particular make writing about third-century Asia Minor difficult since no literary account that gives a clear picture of the relationship of powers in the region survives. Although epigraphic documents from Asia Minor that mention a King Antiochos or a King Ptolemaios indicate political activity on the part of these rulers, the date and context of these inscriptions is hard to establish, and are often based on circular arguments. Therefore, a third-century history will always be hypothetical, and at best provisional.

Yet writing about the third century also has its advantages. The absence of main narratives can reveal actors on the stage of Asia Minor that might be lost in other centuries. For instance, the second-century narratives of the Makkabaeen revolt minimize the people of Samaria and local Arabian sheikhs since they not do form a part of their stories. In this narrative framework we lose these players from the second-century scene, or they appear more marginal than they might have been. Just as Thukydides streamlined the history of the

fifth century into a tale of two cities, and as—in contrast—the absence of ‘a’ main narrative of the fourth century reveals the complexity of Greek history in the classical period more thoroughly, so third-century Asia Minor offers us a view of the power plays of Asia Minor, one which is complicated, confusing, and uncertain, but also rewarding: we see not only local dynasts acting independently (discussed in chapter 1), but also other local agents acting autonomously (discussed in this chapter), at times in accordance with kings and usurpers, while at other at times apparently not. This complexity of the political stage in third-century Asia Minor allows us to place the usurpers in this context, and to ask questions regarding their position.

This chapter will focus on the period from the accession of Seleukos II in 246 to the retaking of Sardes in 213 under Antiochos III: the years of the collapse and absence of Seleukid power in Asia Minor. Its purpose is two-fold: by examining two usurpations in the same geographic space within a twenty-five year period, it both serves as an introduction to the ways in which Seleukid high power-holders made themselves king, and demonstrates the usurpers’ different approaches to kingship. This chapter will assess the limits and possibilities of Seleukid control, and will explore how the two individual usurpers were able to claim the diadem. By assessing their successes, it will illustrate the limitations of the Seleukid dynasty. Although Antiochos Hierax was a member of the Seleukid family—and he promoted this fact in his royal coinage—he was in the end worsted in his conflict with Attalos I of Pergamon, and lost his kingdom. Achaïos was also distantly related to the Seleukid royal family, but chose not to emphasize this relationship. Nevertheless, he was able to establish himself as king in former Seleukid territories, and successfully campaigned against Attalos I until the Seleukid army overpowered him, roughly eight years later.

2.1 LATE THIRD-CENTURY ASIA MINOR AND THE LOSS OF SELEUKID CONTROL, c.246–213

2.1a Prelude: Ptolemaic Resurgence, and the Galatian Tribes

The death of Antiochos II and the survival tactics of two Seleukid dowagers, Laodike and Berenike, led to political instability and an

invasion by the Ptolemaic king. In light of recent scholarship, it should be accepted that Antiochos II did not divorce his first wife Laodike when he married the Ptolemaic princess Berenike, nor were the first Seleukid queen and her sons disgraced.¹ In fact the presence of Laodike with her three children in Babylon in 246 (where, strikingly, Berenike is not mentioned) may suggest that the eldest son Seleukos was being groomed for succession.² The death of the king changed this picture: the two queens fought to promote their sons, and Justin's portrayal of the evils of Laodike, the sorrow of Berenike, and the compassion of the cities of Asia for the latter queen, conveys the uncertainties of these initial weeks and months (Just. *Epit.* 27. 1–8). Seleukos II was ultimately successful in claiming kingship, and he alone is mentioned in direct succession to his father Antiochos in the *Astronomical Diaries* of Babylon.³ Berenike and her young son, Antiochos, were supported by her brother Ptolemaios III, who during his conquest of Seleukid territory, initially claimed to have acted as a guardian to the Seleukid prince.⁴ The long-lost inscription from Adulis on the Red Sea professes Ptolemaic successes during this war. If we read the narrative with an awareness of imperial language, we can see how Ptolemaios III was able to cut deep into Seleukid territory (OGIS 54).⁵ He was received in Antiocheia on the Orontes and marched as far as Babylon, but a revolt in Egypt (App. Syr. 65 [346]; Just. *Epit.* 27. 1. 9) apparently stopped the Ptolemaic advance.⁶ The precise circumstances escape us, but later sources suggest that after roughly four years of war, Seleukos II was able to make a truce

¹ Martinez-Sève 2004.

² The children of Antiochos II in Babylon: AD II 245 A obv. 13. Perhaps we should follow Polyain. 8. 50 where the author suggests that ἐτελεύτησε διάδοχον τῆς ἀρχῆς ἀποδείξας Σέλευκον, 'when he (Antiochos II) died, he appointed Seleukos successor of his empire'. This also seems to be the conclusion to be drawn from AD VI 20 Obv. 28.

³ AD II 245 B, lower edge.

⁴ SEG 42. 994, ed. pr. Blümel 1992.

⁵ Latest bibliography: *I. Estremo Oriente* 451. Beyond the traditional regions, Lykia and Karia also are identified as Ptolemaic territories, and the text mentions campaigns on the whole coast of Asia Minor, as well as expeditions from the Levantine, citing many Seleukid regions up till Baktria. A (now lost) hieroglyphic account also lists the conquered territories, including Macedon, Thrace, the Persis, and Elam: *Urk.* II. 158.

⁶ Antiocheia: *FGrHist* 160. Babylon: *BCHP* 11. 2 demonstrates that he was not received as king in the city. For the Egyptian revolt: *P. Haun.* 6. fr. 1. 15–17 (with Bülow-Jacobsen 1979). *FGrHist* 260 F43... *cumque audisset in Aegypto seditionem moveri*: Huß 1978: 155–6; Huß 2001: 345; Hauben 1990; see also Huß 2001: 373–5 with bibliography.

with Ptolemaios III (Just. *Epit.* 27. 2. 9). Beyond the ancient literary narratives that mention Ptolemaic commanders in Syria and Kilikia after the Ptolemaic withdrawal (*FGrHist* 260 F43. 28–30), epigraphic documents demonstrate that the Ptolemaic king had made large conquests in Asia Minor and had reduced the Seleukid space significantly. Ptolemaic troops again controlled the Ionian and Karian coast;⁷ his troops had set foot on the Hellespont and gained the southern coast of Pamphylia and Kilikia.⁸ Nevertheless, Ptolemaios III was not able to establish himself in the Aiolis or in the Karian hinterland as his predecessors had been able to do.⁹ While these areas

⁷ A narrative: Grainger 2010: 171–94. Karia: see Bagnall 1976: 89–102; Ouranion: it is uncertain if it became Ptolemaic: Varinglioglu, Bresson, Brun, et al. 1992: esp. 173–4 with an interpretation of their second inscription. Kildara: the use of a participle of *προσέρχουμαι* ‘to surrender’ to describe the joining of the Kildareians to Ptolemaios’ cause indicates occupation: Blümel 1992: 131; see also Meadows 2008. Bargylia: an inscription from Bargylia, which also mentions Kildara Theangela and Thodos(a); published with different readings by Ma 2002: 380–2; Dreyer 2002; Wiemer 2001; regardless, the regions seem to have been Ptolemaic until the Seleukid takeover. Euromos: Blümel 1996. Herakleia under Latmos: Wörrle 1988: 434–6. Amyzon: see RC 38 with Ma, Derow, and Meadows 1995: 76–9; see now SEG 58. 1148 which suggests that Amyzon no. 6 could indeed be from the period in question. Ionia: Priene: *I.Priene*² 132. 175. Samos: *IG* 12. 6. 1. 156. For the political context: Habicht 1957b: 227–30 and no. 59. 13–14; cf. Hallof and Mileta 1997: 260–1 and 283. Ephesos: Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F32. 8; a Ptolemaic force at Ephesos: Pol. 5. 35. 11; its strategic position: Pol. 18. 40a; for the recent control of the city: Meadows 2013c. Miletos: for the occupation by Philip V in 201 (Pol. 16. 15. 5–6): Herrmann 2001: 111. For both Kolophons: Gauthier 2003a; Gauthier 2003b. Lebedos/Ptolemais: *I.Magnesia* 53. 79–81; it is not certain when Lebedos was refounded as Ptolemais: cf. Cohen 1995: 189; Herrmann 1965: 114 n. 141 refers to a (still) unpublished fragmentary inscription mentioning Ptolemaios III and Berenike II; cf. Kinns 1980: 251–5. Teos: despite a lack of evidence, Teos likely became Ptolemaic in this context; Robert, *OMS* IV: 149 refers to an unpublished inscription mentioning Ptolemaic queens. For Herrmann 1965: 115 the city was Attalid since the defeat of Antiochos Hierax.

⁸ For Kilikia: Rough Kilikia was Ptolemaic: cf. Jones and Habicht 1989: 332; see Guéraud 1931–2: 20–7 no. 8 on a gymnasium at Nagidos dedicated to Ptolemaios, apparently in decay in 232/1. For Seleukid Kilikia: see Appendix A, n. 4. For Lykia: see Bagnall 1976: 105–10; Hölbl 2001: 48–51; as well as Wörrle 2011. For Pamphylia: evidence for Pamphylia is restricted to the eastern coast of the Pamphylian sea; see Jones and Habicht 1989: 328–35. For Arsinoe (east of Alanya): Cohen 1995: 335–7 with bibliography. For an Alexandrian epitaph of an envoy from Arsinoe in Pamphylia dating to 234: *SEG* 38. 1680. Ptolemais: it is possible that the city mentioned in Strabo (14. 4. 2) was refounded during the campaign of Ptolemaios III: Cohen 1995: 339; cf. Robert 1987: 288 and Huß 1976: 191.

⁹ For Karia: Mylasa: *ILabraunda* 1–4; cf. Kobes 1995. Alabanda: Alabanda was, presumably from c. 240 onwards, alongside Alinda in the sphere of Olympichos: see Meadows 2008. It is possible that Ptolemaic influence in the later third century did not extend over the Latmos. Çamlidere (Harpasos valley): a tribe Ptolemais in an

were still nominally under Seleukid authority, the local agents around Mylasa, the Maiander valley, and the city of Smyrna increasingly acted more and more independently as Seleukid control was waning.¹⁰ Ptolemaic troops stationed on the coast of Asia Minor, and the Attalid rulers' affirmation and expansion of their interests must have caused friction with Seleukid interests. This is evident in the wars between Antiochos Hierax and Achaïos against Ptolemaic, and with increasing frequency, Attalid troops. Furthermore, the Ptolemaic king also knew how to interfere in Seleukid politics. Surviving evidence illustrates direct communication between the Ptolemaic kings and the usurpers at times, suggesting the Ptolemaic kings' potential to influence the political sphere of Asia Minor beyond their newly conquered regions.¹¹ The local power-holders of Asia Minor, the Attalids of Pergamon, the rulers of Bithynia, and (remotely) those of Pontos were between these two fronts, and actively furthered their own spheres of influence too.

A further power active in Asia Minor in the third century is more difficult to assess: the Galatian tribes.¹² There is no direct evidence for the Galatians in the period in question; however, since they were involved in the power politics of Asia Minor as soon as they had set across from Europe in 278/7, it is very likely that they continued to be active throughout the third century. Nikomedes of Bithynia was the first Hellenistic ruler who hired the Galatian tribes for their military service against his brother Zipoites the Younger, and it is possible that they remained in the service of the Bithynian ruler in their battles against Antiochos I.¹³ A number of documents from the cities of Asia Minor illustrates the military activity of the Galatians, and although they were hired presumably as any other mercenaries in

inscription dated to the wars against Aristonikos does not necessitate Ptolemaios III's conquest as proposed by Briant, Brun, and Varinglioglu 2001. For coinage in the Harpasos valley: Delrieux 2008.

¹⁰ For Olympichos: see ch. 1.3.

¹¹ For Ptolemaios III's contact with Antiochos Hierax: Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F32. 8. Polybios' narrative on the interaction between Ptolemaios IV and Achaïos: Pol. 5. 42. 7–8; 5. 66. 3; 5. 67. 12–13; 8.15.1–10; Schmitt 1964: 161–4 and 166–71.

¹² On the Galatians: see now Coşkun 2011b; Coşkun 2011a; Strobel 1996. For the later period: S. Mitchell 1993.

¹³ Memnon *FGrHist* 434 F11. 1–5. For Nikomedes' active role and the alliance: Memnon *FGrHist* 434 F11. 2. For the crossing: Memnon *FGrHist* 434 F11. 3. See also Paus. 10. 15. 2; Paus. 10. 23. 14; and Liv. 38. 16. 9. For initial wars against Antiochos I: perhaps Pomp. Trog. 25; see Strobel 1996: 246–7.

the Hellenistic period,¹⁴ inscriptions from the communities in western Asia Minor described them as sacrilegious bandits, raiding the Greek countryside, and spreading terror.¹⁵ The kings tried to pacify these Galatians. Antiochos I later promoted a victory in a certain 'Elephant Battle' against these forces, and he seems to have come to an agreement with them, accepting their settlements in central Anatolia, and possibly granting further territories.¹⁶ On the level of high-power politics, Antiochos I presumably used this victory in his attempt to gain acceptance in Asia Minor. He took the title of *sôtēr*, claimed to be first to defeat the Galatians from western Asia Minor (App. Syr. 65 [343]), and while no certainty can be reached, it was perhaps because of his victories against the Galatians that he received honours from the Greek cities.¹⁷ Similarly the Attalid rulers and the rulers of Bithynia would use campaigns against the Galatians in order to demonstrate their care for the Greek cities (Pol. 5. 111. 6–7). At the local level, we find honours bestowed by village communities on Achaïos the Elder, *kyrios* of an estate around Laodikea on the Lykos. He was hailed as *sôtēr* when his officials bought back hostages taken by the Galatians.¹⁸ Yet the defeat of the 'yoke of Asia Minor' was only one part of how to proceed with the Galatians. The Seleukid kings also hired Galatian mercenaries, and they paid them for their services. It is probably the payment of mercenaries that finds its way reshaped (perhaps by an Attalid source) into Livy's account, when he writes that 'in the end even the kings of Syria did not refuse

¹⁴ Strobel 1994b: 66–96, here 75; Strobel 1996: 242.

¹⁵ For the raid of the sanctuary at Branchidai: *I.Didyma* 426. Priene: *I.Priene*² 28 for sacrilegious behaviour, esp. ll. 4–13 and the murder of Greeks ll. 13–15. This is echoed in the literary sources: e.g. Pol. 3. 3. 5; Liv. 38. 16. 10; Paus. 10. 15. 2–3.

¹⁶ 'Elephant Battle': see ch. 1.3, n. 116. Some Galatian settlements: Memnon *FGrHist* 434 F11. 6–7; note also Strab. 12. 5. 1–2 and Liv. 38. 10–12 for a first-century explanation of their settlement. Whether we can follow the opinion of Strobel 1996: 261–2 for whom Antiochos I's position was so strong as to organize the Galatian settlers according to his wishes, is at least questionable. See also Coşkun 2011b: 121–2.

¹⁷ Honours: *OGIS* 229. 100 (republished as *I.Smyrna* 573); *I.Erythrai* 207. 22; 36; 49; 72–3 and 93–4 with Habicht 1970: 93–6; *Syll.*³ 426. 21 with Habicht 1970: 103. *I.Laodikeia am Lykos* 1. 12–13. Coşkun 2011b has argued, however, that the connection between the individual *polis* honours and the defeat of the Galatians is not as certain as has been previously suggested.

¹⁸ For Achaïos the Elder: *I.Laodikeia am Lykos* 1. 7; 9; 14–15; 24–6. While Achaïos was somehow related to the House of Seleukos, I do not follow the hypothesis that he was a brother of Antiochos I. Moreover, although Achaïos evidently had an estate in the Lykos valley, I do not believe he was on the same level as the dynasts of Asia Minor, such as the Philomelids or the Attalids: see also ch. 1.1a.

to pay them tribute (*stipendium dare non abnuerunt*)' (Liv. 38. 16. 13). A further note in Livy demonstrates that a discourse of victory over the 'barbarians' did not preclude Seleukid kings from hiring Galatian troops as late as the reign of Antiochos III (38. 12. 4).¹⁹

In the period under investigation we find the Galatians both as 'plundering barbarians' and royal auxiliaries. The Galatians reappeared as individual 'bandits' in the 230s, when Attalos I of Pergamon used the Galatian raids as a basis for his acclamation as king, and it was also in this period that the Galatians were in the service of Antiochos Hierax.²⁰ Evidence for the earlier period between the 270s and 240s is lacking, and it has been suggested that a strong Seleukid presence in Asia Minor, and Attalid protection of the Aiolis and Mysia, provided some control of the Galatian situation (see ch. 1.1a), which—in return—left little trace in the sources during these years. Further east, it is impossible to decide whether some Galatian tribes already moved southwards from their settlements into the area of Amorium, north-east of Antiocheia in Pisidia, or if this only happened in the 230s. Yet it is this region that the dynasts around Philomelion presumably guarded.²¹ One should not assume that it was only Antiochos Hierax who, after breaking with his brother, decided to hire the Galatians as mercenaries or allied with them as Nikomedes had. Instead the other agents in Asia Minor used their services as well, and Galatian auxiliaries also likely played a role in the military engagements between Antiochos I, Antiochos II, and Ptolemaios II, and thus we should see the Galatians as a powerful basis for the military calculations of the kings and dynasts from this period onwards.²²

While the Greek cities presumably simplified matters by not differentiating between individual Galatian tribes in their praise of their heroes against the Galatian threat, it is the Greek public inscriptions that illustrate that the Galatians were individual agents following their own interests. These accounts give us a glimpse of the Galatians' power, their usefulness for the kings and the dynasts in Asia Minor,

¹⁹ Cf. Strobel 1991: 123–4.

²⁰ See ch. 2.1b.

²¹ Strobel 1994a: 55 suggests that the next phase of expansion only began in the context of the wars between Antiochos Hierax, Seleukos II, and Attalos I, but he admits that certainty cannot be reached. By 188, Galatians formed a prominent part of the population of Toriaion: *SEG* 47. 1745. 3. For Antiocheia in Pisidia: e.g. S. Mitchell 1998: 1–18; for the Philomelids as local agents against Galatian intrusions, see ch. 1.1a.

²² Coşkun 2011b: 122–4; Strobel 1996: 261; cf. Strobel 1991: 123.

and why they became an important factor in the political struggles of the 240s and 230s.²³

2.1b A Royal Usurper: Antiochos Hierax

It was in this period that Antiochos Hierax became king in Asia Minor. The only extensive account of his kingship is narrated in Justin's version of the 'Brothers' War' taken from the universal history of the Augustan historian Pompeius Trogus. Another source describing this period is Porphyrios' chronology of the Syrian kings, but the text's transmission and brevity is problematic.²⁴ Yet while the narratives of later usurpers, such as Achaïos and Alexander Balas, offer fewer gaps and conjectures, even a hypothetical account of Antiochos Hierax's reign highlights fundamental patterns of usurpation that are critical for his claim to kingship.

The second son of Antiochos II and his wife Laodike, and a brother of Seleukos II, Antiochos Hierax was born around 255. In 246, he appears alongside his brother in Babylon (*AD II* 245 A obv. 13). After the death of Antiochos II and the accession of Seleukos II, we find the king fighting off invading Ptolemaic troops in the Levant. Antiochos must have returned to Asia Minor a few years later when his brother seems to have appointed him to defend Seleukid interests in the region (Just. *Epit.* 27. 2. 6).²⁵ The sources suggest that the phase between his appointment and the peace treaty between Ptolemaios III and Seleukos II was rather short, and it is not possible to assign specific military campaigns of Hierax to this period. It is probable, however, that Hierax's campaigns involved safeguarding the Hermos valley and limiting Ptolemaic expansion into the Kaystros, and maybe (though less probably) in the Maiander valley. In these military campaigns Antiochos was probably supported by Alexander, the commander of Sardeis (Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F32. 8), who was

²³ Yet perhaps not the most important power in Anatolia in this period: Coşkun 2011b: 128–9.

²⁴ On Justin: Yardley and Develin 1994: 4–10 with references. On both authors: Primo 2009: esp. 209–10 and 295–303.

²⁵ As already stressed by Wilcken 1893: 2457 the post was often granted to close relatives, notably sons. On the role of brothers and sons in the royal succession, see Chrubasik forthcoming c. Note Coşkun forthcoming, who places the usurpation of Hierax already at this stage.

Antiochos II's governor of Asia Minor or, as titled in an inscription from Bargylia, the one 'left behind by the king' (*I.Iasos* 608. 47–8). Given Antiochos' youth, it was presumably this Alexander (the brother of Antiochos Hierax's mother Laodike) who was the actual military commander of the campaigns.²⁶

The military appointment of a royal family member during the war between Seleukos II and Ptolemaios III had the desired results. Justin indicates that 'in the meantime, Ptolemaios had learned that Antiochos was coming to Seleukos' aid (*in auxilium venire*) and to avoid fighting both at the same time, the Ptolemaic king made a ten-year peace treaty with Seleukos (Just. *Epit.* 27. 2. 9). Apparently in the context of this treaty Antiochos took the opportunity to secede from his brother (Just. *Epit.* 27. 2. 10). Successful military campaigns, perhaps against Ptolemaic troops at the end of the Third Syrian War, might have made his claims palatable to his troops. His secession was likely to be supported by Alexander and his mother Laodike, who was still in Sardeis at the time. One should perhaps assume that one of the two also acted as his guardian to support his claims to the diadem.²⁷

Antiochos Hierax established a kingdom that lasted roughly twelve years. Yet if they are not mentioned in the victories of his enemies, most of his politics remain in the dark. Antiochos Hierax had to rely on his army and recruit fresh troops in order to defend his newly acquired kingship against his brother, and fight off Ptolemaic forces on the coast of Asia Minor. He also had to come to an arrangement with Attalos I, the dynast of Pergamon. Plutarch, in a side note (Plut. *mor.* 489B), mentions the cities over which Hierax ruled, but what was the extent of Antiochos' kingdom? Evidence is sparse but nevertheless instructive. Porphyrios mentions Hierax's control of Phrygia (*FGrHist* 260 F32. 8). Numismatic evidence strongly suggests that later the Hellespont became Antiochos' main place of minting and economic activity. Since the earliest hoards containing issues of Antiochos Hierax appear to have a closure time of 235–230, no epigraphic and numismatic evidence can be dated to the early years

²⁶ The Seleukid commander is also attested in other inscriptions: *I.Smyrna* 573. 101; probably RC 29. 4. Laodike: Plut. *mor.* 489A; see Martinez-Sève 2004; cf. Heinen 1984: 420–1.

²⁷ For Seleukid guardians, see e.g. Polybios' discourse on Hermeias: Pol. 5. 41–2; see, ch. 2.2b.

of Hierax's kingship.²⁸ Initially, Antiochos was in control of the Seleukid capital in western Asia Minor, Sardeis, and through this city he could control the Seleukid main artery of the Hermos valley. In the south, Kolophon, Teos, and Ephesos became Ptolemaic in the 240s, and remained in Ptolemaic control during Hierax's reign. Later, Antiochos Hierax could have tried to establish himself in the Maian-der valley, and some coin issues indicate that it was possible that he had control of the area for at least a short period of time.²⁹ Although surviving evidence might distort this image, the geographical space of Antiochos Hierax's kingship seems to have been the Hermos valley, the Hellespont, and parts of Phrygia.

After hearing the news of his brother's usurpation, Seleukos II returned to Asia Minor. Porphyrios suggests that he must have marched as far as Lydia, where he defeated his younger brother in a first battle (*FGrHist* 260 F32. 8). In the next battle, Seleukos II was defeated by Galatians at Ankyra (Pomp. Trog. 27). Porphyrios also suggests that this battle was fought against Mithridates II of Pontos (*FGrHist* 260 F32. 8). We do not know for certain whether Mithridates II or the Galatian tribes were fighting in an alliance with Antiochos Hierax.³⁰ Nevertheless, Trogus' *Prologues*, the source closest to the events, make the defeat of Seleukos II clearly an event during the war against Antiochos Hierax.³¹ This defeat should not be seen as a coincidence, and it was clearly related to the war against his brother. In particular, Justin's account is instructive to solving the matter: the Galatians who defeated Seleukos II demanded pay from Antiochos Hierax (Just. *Epit.* 27. 2. 11–12).³² Even if Antiochos Hierax was not explicitly mentioned, the battle at Ankyra was part of the 'Brothers' War', and for at least this encounter, it seems plausible to interpret Mithridates II as an ally of Antiochos Hierax. Plutarch describes how the Seleukid army was 'cut to pieces'

²⁸ Neither the 'Sardeis Basis' hoard (*CH* 9. 499 = Le Rider 1991) with a closure time of c.240, nor the Meydancikkale hoard (Davesne and Le Rider 1989) with a closure time between 240 and 235, contain coins of Antiochos Hierax. For these hoards, see Appendix A and SC i.2 Appendix 3. See also the 'Seleukos III' hoard in SC ii.2 Appendix 3. For the earliest hoard with coins of Antiochos Hierax, see the Kirazlı hoard, with a closure time between 235 and 230: *CH* 8. 324; cf. Boehringer 1993: 43.

²⁹ SC 909–12; see, however, the cautionary remarks in Appendix B.

³⁰ Coşkun 2011b: 122–3 doubts this alliance.

³¹ Pomp. Trog. 27: ... *item [bellum] in Asia adversus fratrem suum Antiochum Hieracem, quo bello Ancurae victus est a Gallis.*

³² Cf. Coşkun 2011b: 122–3.

(κατακοπεῖσθαι), and even the king went missing.³³ If we can rely on this account, we can see the valour of the Galatian contribution to Antiochos Hierax's victory.³⁴ While Antiochos Hierax also surely recruited troops from the other regions under his control, such as Lydia and northern Mysia, this stress on the Galatians indicates that the Galatian tribes of Phrygia provided Antiochos Hierax with a valuable force that could compensate for his lack of access to troops from other regions of the Seleukid empire.

The depiction of the battle at Ankyra, and the flight of Seleukos II to Kilikia Pedias (Plut. *mor.* 508D), marked the loss of Asia Minor beyond the Tauros for the Seleukid king.³⁵ Yet what about Antiochos Hierax? Justin describes the difficulties between Antiochos Hierax and his Galatian allies who, now that Seleukos II was presumed dead, turned against Antiochos Hierax in order to wipe out the royal line and to pillage Asia Minor more freely (*Epit.* 27. 2. 11). While it is impossible to ascertain the origins of the historical narrative from which this interpretation derives, some light can be shed on the events that followed. Justin mentions that Antiochos Hierax paid the Galatians for their obedience, thus securing an alliance (*Epit.* 27. 2. 12); a procedure that was not very different from previous rulers, and was perhaps reflected in Livy's reference to Seleukid tribute paid to the Gauls (Liv. 38. 16. 13). Given the tone of Justin's narrative regarding Hierax and the Galatians, the payment of the Galatians, who *omnem stirpem regiam extinxissent* 'wanted to wipe out the royal line', should not be interpreted as anything else but the payment of troops after battle and the hiring of new local forces.³⁶ Porphyrios

³³ Plut. *mor.* 489B; Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F32. 8. For the capture of the royal camp: Phylarchos *FGrHist* 81 F30 (*apud* Athen. 13. 593E), and repeated in Polyain. 8. 61.

³⁴ Galatian valour: Just. *Epit.* 27. 2. 11. Mercenaries: Pomp. Trog. 27; Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F32. 8; Just. *Epit.* 27. 2. 10.

³⁵ For Kilikia: Polyain. 4. 9. 6. See Appendix A. There is no evidence for the 'peace' between Antiochos Hierax and Seleukos II in 236, proposed by Tarn 1928: 720, accepted by Bickerman 1944: 76–7 and others (e.g. Will 1979: 295; Allen 1983: 198). Antiochos Hierax, Seleukos II, and their mother Laodike are mentioned in a declaration dated to 8 Addaru 75 SE (21 March 236). This declaration is quoted in a letter from 173/2: Lehmann-Haupt 1892: 330–2. Although Seleukos II and Antiochos Hierax are mentioned as benefactors, their donations could have been made long before 236. Thus, there is no evidence of a peaceful meeting in that year. A new edition is under preparation by R. van der Spek and R. Wallenfels. Many thanks to J. Monerie (Paris) whose copy of the text I used.

³⁶ On Justin's negative narrative of Antiochos Hierax throughout Just. *Epit.* 27. 2. 6–3. 11; see Introduction 0.3 and ch. 2.2a.

mentions campaigns of Antiochos Hierax in Greater Phrygia, where the king collected tribute (*FGrHist* 260 F32. 8), suggesting either extraction by force or the acceptance of Antiochos Hierax's position as king in some parts of Phrygia.

Yet his position was not entirely stable. He was 'betrayed by his courtiers and attacked by the Galatians' (or possibly the other way around), but he managed to escape and withdrew to either Magnesia on the Maiander or, perhaps more likely, Magnesia under Mt. Sipylus (Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F32. 8).³⁷ The betrayal of the courtiers follows the same *topos* as the difficulties Antiochos Hierax encountered with his Galatian allies, yet it also might emphasize difficulties between Antiochos Hierax and his allies. It is worth noting that depending on the date of the battle at Ankyra and the betrayal of the courtiers, Antiochos Hierax continued to reign for roughly nine more years. Despite the instability suggested by the narrative, apparently Antiochos Hierax continued to fight battles and remained king.

The following chronology is even more difficult to assess and only fragmentary evidence gives an indication of Antiochos Hierax's activities. It appears that Antiochos married a daughter of Ziaelas of Bithynia.³⁸ As indicated in a letter by Ziaelas to Kos dated between 246 and 242 (*RC* 25. 22–6), the Bithynian king had been allied with Ptolemaios III during the Third Syrian War.³⁹ In the aftermath of that war, however, we have no evidence regarding his involvement in the power plays of western Asia Minor.⁴⁰ Antiochos Hierax's marriage to a daughter of one of the kings of northern Asia Minor probably marked the peak of his kingship. The Hermos valley, and with it Sardeis, likely remained under Antiochos' control until his defeat near Lake Koloë in the later part of his reign (*I.Pergamon* 27), even if the city minted no coinage until the arrival of Achaïos.⁴¹ If he was in

³⁷ For Magnesia, see Appendix B.

³⁸ For Ziaelas and the marriage: Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F32. 8; see Habicht 1972b.

³⁹ For Ptolemaic activity in the region, note Herzog and Klaffenbach 1952: no. 8. ll. 5–6. In these lines the letter from Ainos mentions Ptolemaios and his wife Berenike; this territory must have been acquired during the Third Syrian War, and this also provides a possible date for the letter of Ziaelas: see commentary on *RC* 25; Habicht 1972b.

⁴⁰ He died perhaps in 230 when, according to Pomp. Trog. 27, he was slain by the same Galatian tribes that were defeated with Hierax at battle near Pergamon: Habicht 1972b: 394–7.

⁴¹ Seleukos II: *SC* 652–63. Antiochos Hierax and 'Sardeis': see the lemma to *SC* 900–3. Achaïos: *SC* 952–9; Ad199–201. Also, the suggested period of independence in

control of Sardeis, he also may have continued to control certain parts of Phrygia, although it is possible that his ties there were weakened in the later period. The numismatic evidence from mainly Alexandria Troas, Lampsakos, Ilion, Abydos, Parion, Lysimacheia, and Skepsis indicates that the Hellespont became a region of extensive minting activities from the mid-230s onwards. The area of the Skamandros valley was very fertile and rich in resources, but could only be reached by the northern route through Mysia into Phrygia, and by a southern route close to Pergamon. Antiochos Hierax's activities in the Troad further suggest that he was able to push back the Ptolemies from the area.⁴² If Ptolemaic troops had taken control of the coast of the Troad in the Third Syrian War and refounded Larisa as Ptolemais,⁴³ it is doubtful that the city could have remained a Ptolemaic enclave in Antiochos Hierax's territory. Ptolemaic garrisons must have been forced to leave the city, or change allegiance, and Ptolemaic influence in the Troad and the Hellespont must have ended for now.

While the Troad was an important region, the usurper's interest seems to have gone beyond the coast of Asia Minor. Like his father Antiochos II and his nephew Antiochos III, Antiochos Hierax attempted to control the Bosporos; the large output of struck silver coinage, as well as his apparent mint in Lysimacheia, may suggest military campaigns on the northern fringe of Asia Minor and the usurper's interest in Thrace.⁴⁴ It is also in this context that we should perhaps date an oath exchanged between a King Antiochos and the people of Lysimacheia (*I.Ilion* 45). If the document can be assigned to Antiochos Hierax, it may demonstrate a new way of interaction between this city and the king.⁴⁵ The transfer in the administration of the fortress at Hieron on the southern bank of the Bosporos

Seyrig 1986: 35–8 should not fit this context. This had been accepted by Gauthier 1989: 166–7; see, however, Price 1991: 321.

⁴² This list is arranged by the numbers of dies, which were minted in the name of Antiochos Hierax. Alexandria Troas had 17 different dies for Antiochos Hierax, followed by Lampsakos with 11 dies, and Abydos with 6: Boehringer 1993: 37. Cities such as Teos did not mint coins for Antiochos Hierax, which might suggest that they were under Ptolemaic influence during this period: SC i.1 p. 292.

⁴³ Larisa/Ptolemais: Robert 1987: 281–95 who attributes coins to the newly founded Ptolemais: cf. Cohen 1995: 157–9.

⁴⁴ Thracian activities of Antiochos I and Antiochos II: (perhaps) *I.Ilion* 45; *IGBulg.* I² 388 with Avram 2003. For Antiochos III: Grainger 1996.

⁴⁵ The lettering of the text would certainly allow it to be Antiochos Hierax. I am currently preparing a new reading of this stone, see also ch. 2.2a.

overlooking one of the narrowest sections of the Bosporos in the name of Seleukos II to the people of Byzantion can further illustrate strategic (and likely economic) interest in the Bosporos. While the precise context is unclear, it is tempting to explain the stronger Byzantine presence at the site of the Hieron in relation to the increasing activities of Antiochos Hierax, and to propose that Seleukos II tried to limit his brother's influence.⁴⁶

Hierax's activities in the Troad and the Hellespont, however, were dangerously close to the region of interest of another player in western Asia Minor: Attalos I. In contrast to his Seleukid predecessors, Antiochos Hierax was not able to reposition Attalos I under his rule, or to secure an alliance with the ruler of Pergamon. Justin states that Attalos I (close in age to the Seleukid princes) saw the wars between Seleukos and Antiochos as an ideal opportunity to extend his own influence in Asia Minor (*Epit.* 27. 3. 1),⁴⁷ and the historical developments demonstrate the successful campaigns of Attalos I. Beyond opportunism, however, one could hypothesize that Seleukos II was favourable towards Attalos I's opposition to Antiochos Hierax. One way of looking at it would be to argue that Attalos I only opposed a usurper, and perhaps it was already under Seleukos II that Attalos I's kingship was acknowledged, as were perhaps the eastern kings in the reign of Antiochos II.⁴⁸ While this construction is attractive (and could be supported by the scenarios described in chapters 1 and 3), the lack of evidence means that it must remain speculative.

Whether or not Attalos I was encouraged by Seleukos II, some time after his accession in 241 Attalos I successfully fought the Galatian Tolistoagoi at the sources of the Kaikos, took the diadem, and was celebrated in Pergamon as a saviour (Pol. 18. 41. 7).⁴⁹ Attalos I's

⁴⁶ Pol. 4. 50. 2–3; Dion. Byz. *Anaplys Bospor.* 92–3 (Günther). It is important to note that Polybios explicitly uses a participle of *ἀνέσθαι* to describe that the fortress was purchased. While it would be difficult to explain this sale strategically, perhaps this is what indeed happened. It also is possible, however, that the Byzantines received the right to tax-farm the land, or to guard it, and later reinterpreted these rights to their favour. Regardless, the conflict between Antiochos Hierax and Seleukos II seems to be the most appropriate context: cf. Moreno 2008: 669. See also ch. 2.2a.

⁴⁷ I follow that the description *rex Bithyniae Eumenes* was in fact a mistake for Attalos I of Pergamon: cf. Coşkun 2011b: 123.

⁴⁸ See ch. 1.1.

⁴⁹ See e.g. Schalles 1985: 51. Saviour: *I.Pergamon* 43–5. The declaration should probably be dated to the mid-230s, although Attalos presumably antedated his

interest in demonstrating his success as king is further evidence of the relationship between Attalos I and Antiochos Hierax. In particular, the long bathron, a monument dedicated to Athena Polias (*I.Pergamon* 21) giving thanks for the victories of the first king against Galatians and other enemies, and labelled with inscriptions along the (probably) eastern and northern sides,⁵⁰ is not only an Attalid history lesson that was meant to demonstrate the king's resources and his vast reach, but also the inscriptions bear witness to Antiochos Hierax's attempt to secure his position in Asia Minor during his later years. One inscription in particular demonstrates the fragility of Attalos I's position despite his growing strength. While the text commemorates a victory by Attalos I against the Tolistobogian and Tektosagian Galatians and King Antiochos at the Aphrodision (*I.Pergamon* 23), the Aphrodision mentioned in the inscription is most likely the Aphrodision Philip V later destroyed, which was very close to the city of Pergamon itself (Pol. 18. 2. 2 and 18. 6. 4).⁵¹ This inscription illustrates not only an Attalid victory, but also the military prowess of Antiochos Hierax's army. If the usurper was able to advance so close, his successes against Attalos I are evident, and the continued precariousness of Attalid power in this early phase of the Attalid kingdom (before the rewriting of the dynasty's history in the monuments on the acropolis) is clearly visible.

Despite occasional success, however, it would appear that in the long term Antiochos Hierax was not able to win battles against Attalos I. Both Porphyrios and the Attalid victory monument list defeats of the usurper. The actual geographic interpretation of both accounts is problematic, and probably impossible. Porphyrios listed Hierax's defeats and located them twice in Lydia, another near Koloë (apparently the sanctuary's location in Lydia was unknown to the author), a further defeat in Karia,⁵² and the usurper's death in Thrace

kingship later to the time when he took over the reign: Allen 1983: 195–9; cf. Bickerman 1944: 77 (although Bickerman's analysis of the tile stamps is now rejected).

⁵⁰ On the location: Wenning 1978: 39–42. See also Schalles 1985: 100–2 for a possible date. Hoepfner 1997: 129–34 has plans and images. His construction, however, is almost fanciful.

⁵¹ It was presumably in the outskirts of Pergamon, not far away from the later founded Nikēphorion: Strab. 13. 4. 2; Liv. 32. 33. 5; Hansen 1971: 35; cf. Kohl 2002: 238–47 whose proposal for the new location of the Nikēphorion is not entirely convincing. Habicht 1972b: 394 dates this event to c.230.

⁵² While a place in Karia is attested in *I.Pergamon* 28 (republished as *OGIS* 279), the text was reconstructed with *I.Pergamon* 58 (*OGIS* 271) attesting to a battle against a King Antiochos. The lettering of the latter inscription, however, certainly is later

(Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F32. 8). The victory near the sanctuary of Artemis Koloë also seems to be commemorated in the Attalid inscriptions (*I.Pergamon* 27),⁵³ and could be interpreted as the usurper's loss of Sardeis and the Hermos valley. Whether the previously mentioned battle near the Aphrodision (*I.Pergamon* 23) might have taken place before or after this is impossible to ascertain,⁵⁴ and the same holds true for an attested Attalid victory over Antiochos Hierax in Hellepontine Phrygia (*I.Pergamon* 22), which could be placed both before the usurper's move south towards Pergamon, or, perhaps preferably, after returning back to the Hellespont.⁵⁵

At some point, perhaps in 228 or 227, Antiochos Hierax was apparently driven out of Asia Minor (Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F32. 8). It is possible that the cities of the Troad, and especially Alexandria Troas, now used the political vacuum left by the absence of Antiochos Hierax to engage actively in their civic display of independence. If this was the case, the celebration of the Great Panathenaic festivals perhaps could be dated to 229 or 225.⁵⁶ While absent from Porphyrios' account, it seems clear that after Antiochos' expulsion from Asia Minor the king seized his last opportunity to keep his remaining troops under his standard by marching east, as Demetrios Poliorketes had done before him.⁵⁷ Antiochos moved towards Mesopotamia in order to conquer his brother's kingdom, while Seleukos was on campaign against the Parthians.⁵⁸ Although Antiochos Hierax was

than that of the victory inscriptions from the long bathron. If this has an impact on whether to follow Dittenberger in associating this inscription with Attalos I and Antiochos Hierax is not entirely clear.

⁵³ The fragment regarding Lake Koloë was republished as *OGIS* 278. I am not certain whether *I.Pergamon* 28 (*OGIS* 279) refers to a victory in Karia against Antiochos Hierax, see n. 52.

⁵⁴ Aphrodision: *OGIS* 275. If *I.Pergamon* 24 (*OGIS* 276) refers to a further victory against the Tolistoagians at the Kaikos as suggested by the editor (beyond that which was the root of Attalos I's fame), this does not necessarily mean that these Galatians were not in an alliance with Antiochos Hierax (as attested in *I.Pergamon* 23).

⁵⁵ For the preferred (even if hypothetical) scenario, see also n. 60.

⁵⁶ For the text: *SEG* 53. 1373; discussion with references: Knoepfler 2010; Ma 2007: 56. On the *koinon*: Ellis-Evans 2014. The discussion of Antiochos Hierax's building programme at Ilion by Rose 2014: 175–93 is unrealistic; the reconstruction of Hertel 2004 is persuasive.

⁵⁷ On Demetrios' final campaign: Plut. *Dem.* 46. 5–50. 9.

⁵⁸ Seleukos II had been able to at least once push Arsakes back (Strab. 11. 8. 8), yet he was not able to retake the province (Just. *Epit.* 41. 4. 4–10); Coloru 2009: 157–73.

successful in at least one battle (Polyain. 4. 17), he was ultimately defeated (Just. *Epit.* 27. 3. 7), and he apparently fled to his relative Ariarathes of Kappadokia (Just. *Epit.* 27. 3. 8). From this point onwards, Justin's account is difficult to interpret: out of trust (*fides*), Antiochos went to the Ptolemaic king (*Epit.* 27. 3. 9), and here Justin possibly refers to a retreat from Kappadokia along the Persian royal road to north-western Asia Minor into the Propontis or Chersonnesos, which was under (perhaps recent) Ptolemaic occupation.⁵⁹ The earlier mentioned Attalid victory against Antiochos Hierax in Helle-spontine Phrygia (*I.Pergamon* 22) also could be placed in this final period.⁶⁰ Justin, who makes no mention of the Attalids, describes Hierax's escape and his death, which both Polybios and Porphyrios place in Thrace, possibly in 226 or 225; it is Trogus' prologue that suggests he had been killed by Galatians.⁶¹

The deaths of Antiochos Hierax and Seleukos II mark the endpoint of the accounts of the 'War of the Brothers', and it is difficult to disentangle the historical thread from these narratives. Nevertheless, Antiochos Hierax reigned for roughly twelve years, and established a kingdom in western Asia Minor that spanned from at least the Hermos valley to the Hellespont and east into parts of Phrygia, based on one of the arteries of former Seleukid control. Attalid success marked an end to his kingdom, and western Asia Minor was no longer a Seleukid sphere. It is possible that without Antiochos Hierax, Seleukos II would have paid more attention to the activities of the dynast of Pergamon who now called himself king. It was only after the death of Seleukos II that kings began to claim Asia Minor for themselves again.

2.1c The Cousin 'Left Behind by the King': Achaïos

Soon after his accession in 225, the young king Seleukos III began an expedition into Asia Minor in order to defend his *πράγματα*, his

⁵⁹ Perhaps it was only recently that Priapos had been taken: *SEG* 34. 1256; Ma 2002: 45; Şahin 1984, and *BE* 1987 no. 280.

⁶⁰ If one were to interpret this battle as a final victory over Antiochos Hierax, this could explain the inscription's central role within the Attalid monument. For the central position: *I.Pergamon* p. 26. Needless to say, while logical, it is at least not a necessity that the central position of the inscription (and the statues associated with it) should also vouch for the event's central role.

⁶¹ Last escape: Just. *Epit.* 27. 3. 11. Death in Thrace: Pol. 5. 74. 4; Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F32. 8. Galatians: Pomp. Trog. 27.

affairs (Pol. 4. 48. 7). The king was also accompanied by Achaios, his *οἰκεῖος*. Achaios had been a commander under Seleukos II (Polyain. 4. 17), and it is possible that he knew Asia Minor, or at least Phrygia, well because his family had an estate in the Lykos valley.⁶² Seleukos III probably marched through Kilikia Pedias and Tarsos, where two mints struck coinage for him. He crossed the Tauros, or he boarded ships and landed on the coast of Pamphylia to go inland perhaps via Pisidian Termessos (where he struck coinage). If the latter was the case, we should presumably envision a divided campaign as later under Antiochos III: a divided army that would meet around the area of Apameia.⁶³ From there Seleukos III marched to Apameia and Laodikea, where further coinage for the king was minted,⁶⁴ but it was in Phrygia where the expedition came to an abrupt halt. It is possible that while the king had crossed with a great army, some might not have seen him as the driving force behind the expedition. He was still a young man, and Appian describes how his campaign was met with difficulties since the king failed to obtain obedience.⁶⁵ He was ambushed (perhaps set up by some *philoi*?), and was assassinated by two 'Galatians' with Greek names, Apaturios and Nikanor, probably in early 222.⁶⁶ Achaios, however, not only put the assassins to death, but also took command over the force and the royal affairs, and—according to Polybios (4. 48. 9)—he conducted them wisely (*φρονίμως*) and magnanimously (*μεγαλοψύχως*). Achaios did what a successor had to do. He avenged the king's death, and apparently this made him suitable for kingship himself. Polybios' narrative describes how, although the troops urged him to take the diadem, he instead saved the kingship for Antiochos, the younger of the sons of Seleukos II

⁶² For the family: see ch. 2.2b.

⁶³ Ma 2002: 82–4; cf. Meadows 2009.

⁶⁴ Either Seleukos II or Seleukos III took Kilikia Pedias from the Ptolemies. See Appendix A. For Tarsos: SC 917–19. For Termessos: SC 916; Meadows 2009: 71. For a Phrygian mint, perhaps Apameia: SC 915; cf. SC 906–8 (perhaps the same officials). Mørkholm argued for a mobile military mint, but Houghton and Lorber show further evidence of a workshop in a city; cf. Mørkholm 1969: 14–15.

⁶⁵ Age: Alexander cannot have been born much earlier than 243: Stähelin 1923a; Pol. 4. 48. 7 (*Σέλευκος ὁ νέος*). Phrygia: Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F32. 9. Constitution of the king: App. Syr. 66 (348) with Brodersen, *BAS*: 207.

⁶⁶ Polybios only mentions the avenging of the murder by putting these individuals to death and not the execution of other courtiers: Pol. 4. 48. 9. Appian Syr. 66 (348) states that he was poisoned in a court conspiracy. For the year of his death: Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F32. 9 and CM 4 r. 2 with van der Spek's translation (http://www.livius.org/k/kinglist/babylonian_hellenistic.html [23 April 2016]).

(Pol. 4. 48. 10).⁶⁷ The newly acclaimed Antiochos III received some of the army from Achaïos (possibly the royal guard), and he entrusted Achaïos with the government on the northern side of the Tauros.⁶⁸

Achaïos was successful in his position, and although he advanced energetically and recovered 'the whole of this side of the Tauros' (Pol. 4. 48. 10–11), Polybios perhaps exaggerates his success. Yet he clearly reversed Attalos I's achievements. On Achaïos' way to Sardeis it is plausible that he established Seleukid control in Phrygia. He became the master of Sardeis, and possibly took charge of Magnesia under Sipylus and Smyrna. He then took Kolophon and probably Teos, and moved north into the Aiolis, acquiring Temnos and Aigai as well as Phokaia and Kyme, thus advancing close to Pergamon itself where Attalos was 'pushed back into Pergamon' (Pol. 4. 48. 11). Achaïos took Didyma Teiche and Karseai in Mysia, and established Themistokles as a *stratēgos* there. The Troad remained Attalid, and Achaïos does not seem to have ventured further north.⁶⁹ Perhaps it was now for the first time that there was a perception of a clear and distinct division between Seleukid and non-Seleukid (Attalid) territories.

Achaïos reaffirmed Seleukid control, and his activities must have led him close to the Ptolemaic possessions on the Ionian coast. With Samos as a naval port and Ephesos as a military base (Pol. 5. 35. 11), Ptolemaic forces and garrisons could be mobilized quickly. The 'forged' letter between Ptolemaios IV and Achaïos (Pol. 5. 42. 7) might reflect Ptolemaic interests in Asia Minor during this period.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ For the accession of Antiochos III in the same year: Brodersen, *BAA*: 207–8; Grzybek 1992: 195–7. The coin issue (SC 999) with an obverse die link to a coin from the reign of Seleukos III (SC 915), and the legend of King Antiochos should be dated to the period of royal transition.

⁶⁸ For the royal guard: Pol. 5. 41. 4; see Schmitt 1964: 110 n. 1. Governor: Pol. 5. 40. 7.

⁶⁹ Ma 2002: 57. Sardeis: while Sardeis is only later described as Achaïos' royal capital, it should have become the administrator's provincial capital relatively early: Pol. 5. 77. 1. Magnesia under Sipylus: Magnesia is not mentioned in Attalos' conquest, but probably fell to Achaïos with Smyrna and Sardeis. Smyrna: although Attalos praises the Smyranean envoys (since the city had preserved to the greatest extent their faith towards him: Pol. 5. 77. 6), it was still taken by Achaïos, since Polybios writes that the cities went over (*μεταβέβηαι*) to Attalos: Pol. 5. 77. 4 (also discussed by Schmitt 1964: 165). Kolophon/Teos: both cities went over to Attalos: Pol. 5. 77. 6. Aiolis: maybe SC 965. Attalos took back cities that had formerly joined Achaïos out of fear: Pol. 5. 77. 2. Mysia: in the Attalid conquest of Mysia, Pol. 7. 77. 8 mentions Themistokles as a *stratēgos*.

⁷⁰ Schmitt 1964: 161–4 downplays the active interest of the Ptolemaic kings in Asia Minor in this period: see ch. 2.2c.

It is unclear how deep into the Karian hinterland Achaïos ventured. As in the case of Antiochos Hierax, the extensive epigraphic dossier at Labraunda regarding the sanctuary and the *polis* of Mylasa does not suggest that he was involved south of the Maiander valley, let alone in Karia, and the dossier might indicate that Olympichos in Alinda showed no concern for Seleukid reprisals.⁷¹

In 220, after Antiochos III put down the revolt of Molon, the king decided to move against other eastern dynasts, demonstrating his strength, and campaigned into Atropatene (Pol. 5. 55. 1–2). Following Polybios, it was the engagement of Antiochos III in far-away campaigns, from which he might not return, that inspired Achaïos to take the title of *basileus*. The soldiers of the Kyrrhestai were in revolt, and both the absence of the king and the support of these soldiers enabled him at this moment to take control of τῶν κατὰ τὴν βασιλείαν πραγμάτων ‘the royal affairs’ (Pol. 5. 57. 3–4). Polybios places an emphasis on the absence of the king in the eastern satrapies at the time of Achaïos’ usurpation. The revolt of the Kyrrhestai, however, was presumably also a major cause. Furthermore, he might have been influenced by Ptolemaic diplomatic activities, which Antiochos III accused him of, unless the relationship between Achaïos and the Ptolemies was fabricated by individuals at the Seleukid court (Pol. 5. 57. 2). Interestingly, it was not in Sardeis that Achaïos assumed the diadem; rather he proclaimed himself king in Laodikeia on the Lykos (Pol. 5. 57. 5).

Founded by Antiochos II, Laodikeia on the Lykos was located on the crossroad between the east–west route from Ephesos towards Apameia and the Kilikian gates, and the northern route coming

⁷¹ Tralleis/Seleukeia: Günther 1988: 397–8 pointed out that in *I.Milet* 1058. 6 Dionysios, son of Iatrokles, does not use the ethnicon of Seleukeia, but rather of Tralleis. His suggestion that Tralleis dropped its Seleukid ethnicon in the early 220s during the turmoil of the period is attractive, but perhaps not convincing: *I.Milet* 47–9 which are dated to 194/3 (I accept Wörrle’s redating of the Milesian *stephanephoroi* list [*I.Milet* 124]; Wörrle 1988: 428–37; see also Errington 1989 with P. Herrmann’s commentary in *I.Milet* n124 and 148) contain the letter alpha with a curved bar, which would have been outside Günther’s scope. Moreover, Habicht 1989a identified that Sosikrates from Abdera in *I.Milet* 1058. 2 also appeared in an inscription from Eretria (to be dated closer to 280); cf. Knoepfler 2001: 269. If *I.Milet* 1058 could be from the period before the initial renaming, then there would be no evidence for the renaming of Tralleis as Seleukeia after a new Seleukid takeover. See *I.Milet* 143 with the addendum in Herrmann’s *I.Milet* n143; cf. Ma 2002: 57. On Olympichos: see ch. 1.3; on Labraunda and Mylasa: see also Chrubasik forthcoming b.

from the Hermos valley and Sardeis. Moreover, as mentioned, the second northern road from Phrygia led to Lykia and Pamphylia via Laodikeia and Apameia. Laodikeia was of vital importance not only for its connections by land, but also for its location near a fertile plain. Evidence of the Hellenistic settlement is sparse and most inscriptions cannot be dated with certainty;⁷² however, it is likely that due to its geographical importance, the settlement pre-dated the Seleukid foundation. An inscription from Denizli gives an account of honours for Banabelos, Lachares, and their landlord Achaïos by the two local villages Babakome and Kiddiourke, perhaps the roots of the later town.⁷³

It was in Laodikeia—which was founded near his family estates and bore the name of one of his family members—that Achaïos assumed the diadem. While it is ultimately speculative to assume that the Laodikeans were particularly loyal to the family of Achaïos, it is possible that the community felt closer to their local benefactor than to the Seleukid king;⁷⁴ nevertheless, the most crucial audience for his acclamation was not the people of the city, but his troops. The latter had to accept Achaïos' kingship in order for him to continue his campaign. They did not hesitate to follow his standard even though he made himself king in a city of his ancestors and his royal name lacked any reference to the Seleukid house. All of his coins bear the legend βασιλεὺς Ἀχαιοῦς in the genitive form.⁷⁵ Instead of adopting a Seleukid name, as his cousin Alexander had done by taking the name Seleukos (Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F32. 9), he intentionally underlined that he was to be distinguished from his Seleukid relatives, and made reference to the individuality of his kingship.

Achaïos continued his expedition, acting like a king and sending royal letters to cities (Pol. 5. 57. 5). It is striking that up to this point Achaïos' troops seemed to have no reservations about their new king.

⁷² For recent surveys of the Hellenistic and (mainly) Roman city: Traversari 2000 and Bejor, Bonetto, Gelichi, and Traversari 2004. The second chapter (by G. Bejor) of the first volume traces the Hellenistic city. For the city as base for Achaïos: S. Mitchell 1994: 132 n. 8. The Hellenistic inscriptions are: *I.Laodikeia am Lykos* 1–8. The dating of nos. 1, 2, and 4 is secure but outside Achaïos' time of activity. The dating of 5 seems to be at the beginning of the second century.

⁷³ *I.Laodikeia am Lykos* 1 with Wörrle 1975. For the administration of private property within the royal land: Wörrle 1975 74–86. For a broader picture: Schuler 1998: 160–80 and esp. 173–5; Boffo 2001: 238; cf. Billows 1995: 96–9.

⁷⁴ See also S. Mitchell 1994: 132 n. 8.

⁷⁵ SC 952–9; Ad199–201. For possible Pisidian issues: SC Ad202–4; C954.

Achaïos was interested in uniting his troops with the revolting Kyrrestai on the other side of the Tauros (Pol. 5. 57. 4), but apparently the undertaking was too dangerous and his troops did not follow him. It perhaps was only when he was near Ikonion, close to Lykaonia, that, according to the Polybian narrative, his soldiers realized that this appeared to be a campaign against τὸν κατὰ φύσιν αὐτῶν ἐξ ἀρχῆς βασιλέα 'their natural and original king', and thus they mutinied (Pol. 5. 57. 6).⁷⁶ Achaïos, aware of the disaffection, turned back to Pisidia, wishing to persuade his soldiers that he did not have the intention of crossing the Tauros (Pol. 5. 57. 7). Pisidia gave his troops enough booty, πάντας εὖνους αὐτῷ καὶ πεπιστευκότας 'goodwill and confidence of them all', and he returned home (Pol. 5. 57. 8); defection and concerns for their king κατὰ φύσιν were apparently not an issue any longer.

It was from this period onwards that King Achaïos began to mint coins at his royal capital in Sardeis, and fulfilled the administrative and euergetical duties in his own name.⁷⁷ In coastal Asia Minor, Achaïos attempted to participate in the wider sphere of international power politics (in the dispute between Rhodes and Byzantion), but the Ptolemaic king persuaded Achaïos not to take any further interest in these matters (Pol. 4. 51. 1–6).⁷⁸ In mainland Asia Minor, however, Achaïos seems to have been unhindered in his attempts to establish a stable administration. At least one *stratēgos* Themistokles is attested in Mysia (Pol. 5. 77. 8) as well as another individual, Aribazos, 'the one left in charge' of Sardeis in the last years of Achaïos' reign (Pol. 7. 17. 9). The corpus of Tralleis/Seleukeia contains an honorific decree for an embassy to a king, who may be Achaïos.⁷⁹ In 218 the people of Pednelissos called on Achaïos for help, resulting in a campaign in

⁷⁶ On the route: S. Mitchell 1994: 132 n. 8. For the episode: Will 1962: 120; cf. Schmitt 1964: 165 n. 5; Ma 2002: 56 and Mittag 2008: 50. The story of the troops' 'late' realization of their commander's intentions is perhaps too similar to the episode under Kyros the Younger narrated by Xenophon (*Anab.* 1. 2. 1–4. 13) to interpret it as anything but a Polybian play with a familiar *topos*.

⁷⁷ For a detailed study of the imagery on the coinage, see ch. 2.2b.

⁷⁸ Wiemer 2002: 103–4 minimizes Ptolemaic interests in the conflict.

⁷⁹ There is a second *stratēgos* called Themistokles, but the inscription also could have been from the later period of Antiochos III: *RC* 41. 9 (republished with supplements as *I.Tralleis* 17). Tralleian inscription: honorary inscription for Leonides: *I.Tralleis* 26. Ma 2002: 57 n. 19 connected two inscriptions, *I.Milet* 143. 5 and *I.Tralleis* 26. 1, both mentioning Menodoros, son of Timeas (for the redating see n. 71). If both inscriptions stand in a close chronological relation, the honorific decree also should be dated to around 218/17. This is hypothetical, but nevertheless intriguing: see also Sherk 1992: 252 n. 86.

which (according to Polybios) Achaïos subdued a large part of Pamphylia (Pol. 5. 77. 1). The fact that Pednelissos asked Achaïos for help perhaps illustrates that neither the Seleukid kings nor the Ptolemies effectively controlled the area.⁸⁰

The Selgians acted confidently in the Kestros valley by threatening Pednelissos, and blocking the pass between Kretopolis and Perge, thereby initially hindering Achaïos' commander Garsyeris from entering the plain (Pol. 5. 72. 3–9).⁸¹ Other cities, such as Etenna and Aspendos, supplied Achaïos with troops. Side refrained from doing so, but in this case Polybios' second explanation (that they hated the Aspendians) is surely more convincing than his first (that they wanted *εὔνοια* 'goodwill' from Antiochos III; Pol. 5. 73. 4); the 'goodwill' was most likely part of a discourse that emerged in the aftermath of the death of the usurper. It also could be interpreted in a similar way to the position of Smyrna and Olympichos, acting in the name of a king who was far away.⁸² The Ptolemaic cities east of Side need not have been taken over, as they were connected by sea with the Ptolemaic settlements of Kilikia Tracheia. Polybios continues his narrative with Achaïos returning to Sardeis, trying to recover his lost territories which Attalos I had taken (Pol. 5. 77. 1–78. 6) while Achaïos was engaged in Pisidia and Pamphylia. He could not replicate his earlier successes though, and Thyateira and Teos remained Attalid.⁸³ Moreover, Polybios writes that he began to menace Prousius and all those living on this side of the Tauros (5. 77. 1), although there was little time for this. After Antiochos III and his troops were defeated at Raphia, the Seleukid king prepared to lead an expedition against Achaïos (Pol. 5. 87. 8).

The fragmented character of books seven and eight of Polybios' *Histories* provides only a very scattered account of the campaign of Antiochos III. The narrative breaks off after Polybios' report that Antiochos III crossed the Tauros, and came to an arrangement (*κοινοπραγία*) with Attalos against Achaïos in early summer 216 (Pol. 5. 107. 4).⁸⁴ It is possible that Antiochos was interested in a quick expedition. Rather than recovering territories in Asia Minor, it

⁸⁰ Cf. Meadows 2009.

⁸¹ On the geography: S. Mitchell 1994: 129–33.

⁸² See chs. 2.1a. and 1.3.

⁸³ Ma 2002: 59. Thyateira: Robert 1962: 37–8. Teos: SEG 41.1003 with Ma 2002: 58 n. 25 and 308–21; cf. Allen 1983: 47–50. We lack information regarding Kolophon: cf. Herrmann 1965: 114–15.

⁸⁴ For the beginning of the campaign: Pol. 5. 109. 5. For the arrangement: Chrubasik 2013: 96–101.

might have been better advised to attack the usurper directly. The later expeditions of Zeuxis and Philip V in Karia suggest that inland Karia was not on the route of the king for now. Instead, he moved directly from Lykaonia towards Apameia and Laodikeia on the Lykos, which must have become Seleukid along the way, and one could speculate about the latter city's fate given its relations to the usurper. It is possible that during this campaign Seleukid troops moved into Pamphylia (again probably only as far as Side) and Hellespontine Phrygia. By 214 Achaïos was surrounded in his capital, Sardeis.⁸⁵

At this point, Polybios' narrative begins again. While the way to Sardeis does not appear to have been difficult for the Seleukid king, the siege was long lasting. Some of Achaïos' garrisons possibly changed allegiance and joined Antiochos III; Achaïos, however, was able to retain enough troops to guard the city. The fortifications of Sardeis were strong and Achaïos' soldiers did not defect. Polybios suggests that it was only with a stratagem of the experienced soldier Lagoras from Crete that Sardeis, with the exception of the acropolis, was finally taken (Pol. 7. 15–18).⁸⁶ The acropolis remained guarded by Achaïos' troops and Polybios does not mention soldiers defecting to their 'natural king'. Both the extended duration of the siege and the apparent loyalty of Achaïos' troops indicate that it would be an oversimplification to suggest that the quick campaign of Antiochos III to Sardeis was met with little resistance. Instead, it seems that the Seleukid king took cities that lay along his route, and was primarily interested in quickly reaching Sardeis.

⁸⁵ Polybios' sources: Primo 2009: 141 and 158; Schmitt 1964: 181–5. For the double nature of the reconquest: Ma 2002: 59–60. For Antiochos III's success: Pamphylia: while Meadow's analysis of the Pamphylian era coinage must be correct, I am uncertain whether Antiochos III's campaign would have led through the coastal regions: Meadows 2009: 75. It is possible that Selge was never taken: Strab. 12. 7. 3. Pisidia: the campaign of 197 might suggest little Seleukid attention beforehand: Liv. 35 13. 5 and 15. 7. Karia: inland Karia seems to have remained Olympichos' territory, and Antiochos III seems not to have come near. Hellespontine Phrygia: the area was Seleukid later, but it might not have been recovered at this point: Pol. 21. 46. 10 with Liv. 38. 39. 15; Schwertheim 1988: 70–3; Wörrle 1988: 460; Ma 2002: 60 n. 30. Sardeis: the dossiers of Antiochos III for Sardeis serve as the *terminus ante quem* for the capture of the whole city. SEG 39. 1283 with Gauthier 1989: 15–19. Furthermore, three coin issues from western Asia Minor (perhaps Aeolis/Ionia or Mysia) might reflect Antiochos III's campaigns against Achaïos: SC 963; 965; 966.

⁸⁶ On Lagoras' previous Ptolemaic career: Pol. 5. 61. 9. Note also Hyroiades the Mardian's similar role in Herodotos' narrative of the Fall of Kroisos' city: Hdt. 1. 84. See Maier 2012: 286–7 who emphasizes that Polybios' narrative implies that Lagoras' success was not necessary.

This stratagem, however, apparently only opened the city and not the citadel. Aribazos and the garrison fled to the acropolis, where Achaïos and his family had found refuge (Pol. 7. 18. 7). In Polybios' narrative a group of Cretans are given the main credit for Achaïos' capture, and it is worth emphasizing that for Polybios, Sardeis fell because the usurper had been taken, not because its soldiers left. An initiative to rescue Achaïos from the acropolis was mounted by Sosibos, an advisor to Ptolemaios IV.⁸⁷ Achaïos trusted the plan laid out to him, and Polybios' narrative describes the fate of Achaïos in a tragic tone: despite a disguise, his capturers could easily tell who Achaïos was since his *philoï* continued to show their natural respect for him (Pol. 8. 19. 3–20. 7). He was brought in front of Antiochos III, and he was made an example of. 'It was resolved first then to mutilate the wretched man, and after that his head was cut off and sown into the skin of an ass, while his body was impaled.'⁸⁸ An argument between Aribazos, the commander of the city, and Achaïos' wife later led to the surrender of the acropolis (Pol. 8. 21. 8–9). This meant not only the end of Achaïos, but also the end of Achaïos' legacy. Antiochos III fined the city, occupied it, and had the gymnasium commandeered for the use of the troops, before he later relieved the city with benefactions.⁸⁹ Sardeis, and with it the Hermos valley and the roads towards the Kilikian Gates, were once again a Seleukid place until they were lost following the defeat of Antiochos III by the Roman armies at Magnesia.

2.2 BECOMING KING IN ASIA MINOR

Both Antiochos Hierax and Achaïos were placed in charge of Asia Minor during a period when the Seleukid authority over western Asia Minor was contested, and the king himself was not able to defend his

⁸⁷ Polybios' narrative of the capture: Pol. 8. 15–21. For service to the Ptolemaic king: Pol. 8. 15. 2; Pol. 8. 15. 8. Ptolemaic funds: Pol. 8. 15. 7. For the 'dramatic' effect of this narrative: Miltisios 2011: 485–92 with criticism in Maier 2012: 126–8.

⁸⁸ Handover: Pol. 8. 20. 8–21. 1–2. Punishment: Pol. 8. 21.3: ἔδοξε δ' οὖν πρῶτον μὲν ἀκρωτηριάσαι τὸν талаίπωρον, μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα τὴν κεφαλὴν ἀποτεμόντας αὐτοῦ καὶ καταρράβαντας εἰς ὄνειον ἄσκῳ ἀνασταυρώσαι τὸ σῶμα. For an analysis of the punishment, see chs 2.3 and 4.2.

⁸⁹ Ma 2002: 61–2; SEG 39. 1283–5 with Gauthier 1989: 20–9; 33–9; cf. Knoepfler 1993: 28.

interests in the region. In order to become king, both Antiochos Hierax and Achaïos had to successfully communicate their royal offers to the armies and the cities of western Asia Minor; instil into these agents that their kingship was in their interest.⁹⁰ While it was their position and resources as well as the king's absence that enabled them to take the diadem, the space of their political action was still contested. Some local power-holders such as Attalos I became more and more influential, and contested the usurpers' claims. This section will analyse both usurpers' attempts to communicate their kingship to the agents of third-century Asia Minor. It will assess their images of kingship and will discuss how to read their royal offers.

2.2a Kingship by Descent: Antiochos Hierax

Antiochos Hierax's appointment in Asia Minor must be placed in its historical context. According to the literary evidence, the key motive was the Ptolemaic expansion in western and southern Asia Minor. If we accept that Antiochos was no older than fourteen, then his promotion could not have been determined by his military expertise. At this age, military experience was hardly possible, and it is likely—as argued on the first pages of this chapter—that his uncle Alexander continued to fulfil his position as chief administrator of Asia Minor. From this perspective, the promotion of Antiochos Hierax made no strategic difference. The literary evidence suggests that Seleukos II thought it was necessary to promote his brother to a post of high command (Just. *Epit.* 27. 2. 6). The appointment of the prince had its desired effects since (according to the narrative) it was this nomination that led Ptolemaios III to make a peace treaty (Just. *Epit.* 27. 2. 9). While Justin's narrative of Antiochos Hierax's bid for power is very difficult to assess, we can interpret this episode along the following lines: first, the age and military experience of the king was not decisive. Antiochos Hierax was the king's brother, and this was an important factor. If we were to place an emphasis on this, it illustrates the greater impact a member of the royal family could have in contrast to a high-ranking royal official. Beyond the appointment of a royal brother, one could argue that Seleukos II was concerned about the military success of his commander in Asia Minor. His uncle

⁹⁰ M. Weber 1980: 122–48, esp. 122.

Alexander had already been in charge of Asia Minor under Antiochos II (e.g. *I.Iasos* 608. 47–8), and was now leading the commands against Ptolemaic units. If this was the case, the nomination of Antiochos Hierax should be understood as limiting the perception of any commanders' individual military success by placing his brother in charge of a territory where the king was not present; Seleukid troops were now fighting in the name of Antiochos Hierax. While the appointment of Hierax enabled the Seleukid king to prevent Seleukid commanders from gaining too much prestige, it was exactly this prestige that enabled Antiochos Hierax to claim the diadem.

The sources do not mention either the place or circumstance of Antiochos Hierax's acclamation, but the specific time of usurpation is worth some consideration. I have argued earlier that it is very plausible that Seleukos II had been promoted as his father's successor, and I would hesitate to place Antiochos Hierax's usurpation in the context of the immediate accession of Seleukos II.⁹¹ Rather, since Antiochos Hierax's precious coinage does not appear to have been struck before the mid-230s, his usurpation should be placed a little later, and kept within the relative chronology of the late sources. If we follow the relative chronology that Antiochos Hierax revolted after the peace with Ptolemaios III (as suggested by Justin and Porphyrios),⁹² it would be hypothetical yet tempting to place the birth of the later Seleukos III in the period before Antiochos Hierax's revolt. Seleukos III (or rather Alexander) must have been born in c.243 at the latest, and birth and survival of the king's son made the position of the king's brother precarious. It should not be surprising that later Antiochos IV did not return to the Seleukid kingdom after he was released from Rome.⁹³ The usurpation of Antiochos Hierax should perhaps be read as the culmination of these three elements, both in the long and short term: his initial appointment was intended to limit the power of Alexander. It was this position in Asia Minor along with his royal descent that gave Antiochos Hierax a certain degree of acceptance beyond the troops. One could further speculate that it was the dynamics at the end of the war (with the eventual arrival of the king and the probable reduction in Antiochos Hierax's powers),

⁹¹ See ch. 2.1b.

⁹² Bickerman 1944: 78; *contra* Coşkun forthcoming.

⁹³ Antiochos III was the first brother of the king to succeed to the Seleukid diadem, and Pol. 4. 2. 7 seems to suggest that Seleukos III had no children. On Seleukid succession: Chrubasik forthcoming c.

and the survival of the first son of Seleukos II, that served as a context for secession.

Antiochos Hierax had to act like a king in the immediate aftermath of his usurpation. He had to defend his territories against his brother, and to persuade his army that he was suited for the diadem. Furthermore, the conflict with Seleukos II, rivalries with Ptolemaios III, and the later conflict with Attalos I also necessitated that he be perceived as the better king in order to hold his position. At the outset of his revolt, and before Seleukos II's final defeat at Ankyra, it is likely that for a while cities, troops, and dynasts, such as Olympichos or the Philomelids, were wondering which king to turn to. Although evidence for this from Asia Minor is lacking, the curious case of Arados perhaps illustrates the dynamics of the period. While Arados was surely beyond the reach of Antiochos Hierax, Strabo writes that it was precisely during the conflict between the two brothers that Seleukos II granted the island liberties in order to secure the island's allegiance (Strab. 16. 2. 14).⁹⁴ Seleukos II granted liberties to communities in order to prevent them joining his brother, and while we still cannot assess the motives why certain groups in Asia Minor would turn to any particular king, we can trace some of the policies of Seleukos II.

The change in administration of the fortress at Hieron on the Bosporos should presumably be placed in the context of competing kings before or after the battle at Ankyra. The Byzantines would later argue that they purchased the fortress (Pol. 4. 50. 2–3). A stronger Byzantine presence at the site might have served to maintain good relations between the Seleukid king in the east and the city, and to obstruct his usurping brother from gaining full control of the Bosporos.⁹⁵ We can see that Olympichos and the city of Smyrna used the political uncertainties to extend their own influence, and although I am inclined to interpret their references to Seleukos II as an act of independence (since the king was far away), it is nevertheless possible that their liberties were at least tolerated by Seleukos II as a measure to limit his brother's authority. Perhaps it was also now that the 'dowry of Phrygia' was given by Seleukos II to the Pontic kings

⁹⁴ We should presumably read this as an attempt to strengthen the position of Seleukos II within his kingdom, and Arados only being one instance. See also Duyrat 2005: 229–34. Note, however, the differing reconstructions by Erickson forthcoming and Coşkun forthcoming.

⁹⁵ For Kallimedes, the Seleukid official: Dion. Byz. *Anaplus Bospor.* 92–3 (Günther-ich); see ch. 2.1b with n. 46.

(Just. *Epit.* 38. 5. 3) in order to create friction between the Pontic rulers and Antiochos Hierax (who now occupied this land). Since we cannot ascertain when during the reign of Seleukos II he would have given the land to Mithridates II, who was at times an ally of Antiochos Hierax, the precise context remains unclear.⁹⁶ Beyond the Pontic kings, it also has been suggested that the resistance of Attalos I against Antiochos Hierax, and the dynast's taking of the diadem, might not have been entirely against Seleukos II's interests.

It was in this political climate that Antiochos Hierax had to persuade the groups in Asia Minor that he was the better candidate for the diadem. But what royal image did Antiochos Hierax try to communicate to these groups? It would be tempting to suggest that the treaty between a King Antiochos and the people of Lysimacheia (*I.Ilion* 45 A) be dated to the period of Antiochos Hierax (which is certainly a possibility), and interpret it as a conscious attempt to gain the support of this community by offering an oath, something we would perhaps not expect in the normal language between the Seleukid king and a subject capital city; nevertheless, this is in the end speculative.⁹⁷ Despite the scarce evidence of Antiochos Hierax's relationship with the groups within his kingdom, it is clear that he created a distinct royal *persona* in his communication with them. His royal precious coinage, for example, enables us to ascertain both the royal image that the king wanted to convey and how his kingship was to be perceived. As mentioned earlier, the hoard evidence indicates that Antiochos Hierax's royal coinage seems to have started rather late: no issues can be dated much earlier than 235. The only region in which Antiochos Hierax's coinage can be attributed to individual cities is the Hellespont and the Troad, where he minted coins in large numbers. The coinage produced in his largest mints, Alexandreia Troas and (the shared mint of) Abydos and Lampsakos, had four times more obverse dies than the obverse dies from the previous period under Antiochos II, indicating the scale of the output.⁹⁸ Antiochos had to pay his troops and his Galatians units. If we think about Antiochos Hierax's army, it is likely that his initial Seleukid units were depleted soon after the campaigns against the Ptolemaic king. His control over

⁹⁶ One should note, however, that McGing 1986b: 22 suggested this dowry to be a later construction of the Pontic kings; Bickerman 1938: 29; cf. Petković 2009; Wörrle 2009: 426 n. 74. For times of alliance, see ch. 2.1b.

⁹⁷ See the discussion in ch. 2.1b.

⁹⁸ Boehringer 1993: 37 and 42.



Fig. 2.1 Tetradrachm of Antiochos Hierax, mint Alexandria Troas, c.246–227 BCE, CSE II 214. Courtesy of Arthur Houghton.

parts of the Hellespont and Phrygia surely enabled him to enlist Mysian and Thracian mercenaries as well as Galatian swordsmen in addition to Seleukid *katoikiai*, such as those living in Lydian Magnesia under Mt. Sipylos. It was these troops with whom Antiochos had to successfully communicate in order to keep them under his standard, and the coinage was an ideal medium to support his royal claims with a royal image; an image his army could see every day (Fig. 2.1).

Antiochos Hierax's imagery has in the past been difficult to assess, but its message is powerful. Scholarship differentiates within the coins of Antiochos Hierax, suggesting that some coins depicted his grandfather Antiochos I, some his father Antiochos II, and some Hierax himself. This approach, however, does not address the importance of the imagery.⁹⁹ A very dominant obverse picture on the coins of Antiochos Hierax shows a Seleukid king with deep eye sockets and a very straight nose.¹⁰⁰ His hair has short curls, which grow larger on the top of the head, and flow over the diadem. The hair also falls in small curls around the neck. Over the ear a wing is depicted, which is presumably a local attribute of Alexandria Troas.¹⁰¹ A seated Apollo, either nude or slightly draped, with the legend βασιλεὺς Ἀντίοχος in the genitive, is depicted on the reverse of all coins.¹⁰² The depictions of Antiochos I and Antiochos II were not employed by Antiochos Hierax

⁹⁹ See the discussion in SC i.1, p. 293; Boehringer 1993: 38 and Fleischer 1991: 28–9.

¹⁰⁰ SC 838; 840; 848; 857; 863; 866–7; 871–2; 874–6; 879–88. Individual features, such as the curls, and especially the eyes and the nose, also can be identified on other coins.

¹⁰¹ Boehringer 1993: 38.

¹⁰² Apollo is depicted on all reverses of Hierax's coins, which also show the image of a Seleukid king: SC 835–38; 840–3; 846; 848–55; 857–72; 874–914; C836.14; Ad190–2.

to disguise the young king's age, as suggested by E. Boehringer,¹⁰³ rather they serve a different purpose. In fact, there is little evidence that the youth of kings was hidden during this period. If the majority of Antiochos Hierax's coins indeed date to the mid-230s,¹⁰⁴ this would have made him roughly the same age as Seleukos II when the latter became king in 246, and Seleukos II is the only king to appear on his coins during the early years of his reign.¹⁰⁵

By minting coins that might have his own features, as well as those of his father and especially his grandfather, Antiochos Hierax attempted to create a *persona* that differed from that of his brother. Seleukos II depicted a clearly individual portrait on his coins that was coherent with Seleukid *formulae* (Fig. 2.4). His brother, however, chose to refer to both his father and grandfather in the facial features of his portrait, thus inserting himself visually into the line of his ancestors. Both Antiochos I and Antiochos II had extended Seleukid influence in western Asia Minor during their reigns (Figs. 2.2–2.3). The amalgamation of three generations of successful Seleukid rulers in western Asia Minor who all bore the name 'Antiochos' culminated in his reign and in his coins. He relied on a connection with his predecessors, creating a royal image that connected him to the House of Seleukos. This continuity is further corroborated by the depiction of the Apollo on Omphalos type on the reverse of Antiochos Hierax's coinage. This seated Apollo starkly contrasts the new standing Apollo reverse created under Seleukos II (and discontinued under Seleukos III).¹⁰⁶

Antiochos Hierax proposed to the groups in his area of influence that he was king because he was a member of the royal family, as transmitted through his royal name and on his coinage. Of course, this stress on tradition and continuity could have largely relied on sustaining the credibility of the coinage as well as sheer practicality, and perhaps it should not be surprising that Antiochos Hierax inserted himself into the line of his ancestors in order to gain acceptance.¹⁰⁷ The main argument, however, follows another line. It is

¹⁰³ Boehringer 1993: 38.

¹⁰⁴ For the hoards, see ch. 2.1b, n. 28.

¹⁰⁵ Since Seleukos II presumably did not mint coinage in Asia Minor after the death of Antiochos Hierax, the king's coinage of Asia Minor thus illustrates his early royal image: SC 643–56; 664; 667–9; 671–2; 674–9.

¹⁰⁶ SC 643–55 for Asia Minor and SC 701–5 for Antiocheia on the Orontes. See also SC 931–2 for coinage of Seleukos III from the Levant.

¹⁰⁷ For the stress on the continuity of coinage: Martin 1985; Meadows 2001; Le Rider 2003: 55–63.



Fig. 2.2 Tetradrachm of Antiochos I, mint Antiocheia/Orontes, 281–261 BCE, CSE II 108. Courtesy of Arthur Houghton.



Fig. 2.3 Tetradrachm of Antiochos II, mint 'Uncertain Mint 31', 261–246 BCE, CSE II 157. Courtesy of Arthur Houghton.



Fig. 2.4 Tetradrachm of Seleukos II, mint perhaps Magnesia under Sipylos, c.246–241 BCE, CSE II 165. Courtesy of Arthur Houghton.

important that Seleukos II chose not to follow his ancestors, and instead created an image that was coherent with Seleukid formulae yet was very different from the self-representation of his predecessors.¹⁰⁸ Antiochos Hierax did not follow this innovatory approach.

¹⁰⁸ Needless to say this was Seleukos II's royal image only on his silver coinage. In written correspondence (e.g. RC 22. 2) he referred to his ancestors, and also the new

He created a distinctive difference to his rival king, and inserted himself visually into a line of Seleukid kings. While Antiochos Hierax was the only usurper to refer to the House of Seleukos, this stress on differentiation is a recurring theme in chapters 3 and 4.

With his nickname Hierax, the hawk, Antiochos drew a close connection to a god. Regardless of whether it was initially attributed to the king,¹⁰⁹ or if it was specifically chosen, it was clearly an accepted nickname. Nicknames were often coined during military campaigns. The perhaps most famous nickname was that of Judas ‘*maqqaebaet*’, Judas the Hammer, name-giver to the house of the Makkabees (e.g. 2 Makk. 8. 1).¹¹⁰ Antiochos’ nephew, the later Seleukos III, would earn the nickname Keraunos, which may have been connected to military campaigns (Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F32. 9).¹¹¹ Antiochos Hierax’s name could have similarly emerged during military campaigns, perhaps to underline the swiftness of his expeditions. Beyond a possible campaign name, it was the reference to the god that may have been decisive (and this may have been equally the case for Seleukos III). By using the name of the bird that was associated with Apollo not only in Homer (*Od.* 15. 526) and Aristophanes (*Av.* 516) but also in Hellenistic sculpture (*I.Délös* 1416 A I. 24–5 and 1417 B I. 25),¹¹² Antiochos drew a close connection to the god that had been heavily promoted from the reign of Antiochos I onwards.¹¹³ Already Seleukos I had given dedications to the god’s major sanctuary at Didyma,¹¹⁴ but his successors in particular funded buildings (*I.Didyma* 479. 9–10), and inscribed themselves into the sacred landscape of the oracle (*I.Didyma* 480. 19–20). Antiochos I had made Apollo the main deity on the royal silver

royal letter from Drangiane, presumably written by Seleukos II (*I.d’Iran et d’Asie centrale* 80bis), demonstrates how in other genres than the royal coinage the king saw it expedient to refer to his ancestors presumably to generate a relationship with his local audiences.

¹⁰⁹ Boehringer 1993: 39.

¹¹⁰ On the difficulties of nicknames: Schunck 2000: 736.

¹¹¹ For Muccioli 1997 the name reflects a relationship with Zeus Keraunos at Seleukeia Pieria.

¹¹² Homer describes the *κῆρυξ*, but see also Arist. *hist. anim.* 620a. 17–18. Cf. Dunbar 1995: 354; Heubeck and Hoekstra 1989: 263. The Delian inscriptions date to 156/5 and 155/4. For the association with Apollo, see Palagia 1984: 319–20; Kokkorou-Alewrás 1984: 324–5.

¹¹³ See Erickson 2011.

¹¹⁴ *I.Didyma* 424. Latest corrections in: SEG 27. 730 with Günther 1977–8; Petzl 1989: 131–3, no. 5. For Antiochos I as *stephanēphoros*: *I.Milet* 123. 37.

coinage,¹¹⁵ and generated an image of a royal house that descended from Apollo and was protected by him. It is very likely that it was also the court historiographers of Antiochos I who promoted the story that already in the late fourth century Seleukos I had consulted the oracle at Branchidai and was addressed by the god as king (Diod. Sic. 19. 90. 4).¹¹⁶ This close relationship between Apollo and the Seleukid kings is also visible during Antiochos Hierax's lifetime. In a letter to Miletus, Seleukos II explicitly emphasized his *syngeneia* with the god (RC 22. 4–7), and Antiochos Hierax was even named after Apollo's bird.

The nickname of the king, however, also allows us to observe the construction of usurpers' images in our literary sources. For Justin, the nickname had a different meaning: 'and he was called Hierax, since he resembled a bird of prey more than a human being, making his living by preying on the possessions of others.'¹¹⁷ Hierax was the name attributed to a usurper. Whether the association of this aspect of the hawk with Hierax was constructed by Trogus, Justin, or a different (perhaps Seleukid) narrative hostile to the usurper, we do not know. For Plutarch this problem does not seem to have existed: in a passage on people with 'animal-like' epithets, he describes that Phyrros of Epiros liked (*ᾗδετο*) to be called an eagle, and Antiochos a hawk.¹¹⁸

The semantic field of the association of the hawk with Apollo is visible enough to accept that Antiochos Hierax carried his name to underline his relationship with the god. Yet Justin's characterization nevertheless reveals the possibilities of different readings: a name could be perceived negatively. Also contexts differ: perhaps it was opportune in one (military?) context, and not in another, and—ultimately—the name Hierax demonstrates that while its semantics might have been initially clear to its desired audiences, these semantics could be rewritten by opponents, and in particular after the usurper's death.

¹¹⁵ For the depiction of Antiochos I and Apollo: SC e.g. 310–11; 324–8. The precious coins of Antiochos II nearly exclusively show the combination of the royal portrait with Apollo on the reverse: SC 481–639. Most mints that issued coins with other combinations also issued coinage with Apollo on the reverse.

¹¹⁶ Primo 2009: 181–90.

¹¹⁷ Just. *Epit.* 27. 2. 8: *Unde Hierax est cognominatus, quia non hominis, sed accipitris ritu in alienis eripiendis vitam sectaretur.*

¹¹⁸ Plut. *mor.* 975B (*de sollertia animalium* 22). Cf. Plut. *Pyrrh.* 10. 1.

With both his name and his coinage Antiochos Hierax tried to insert himself into the line of Seleukid kings who had ruled over Asia Minor, and it is possible that with the name Hierax he displayed his success as military commander of his troops. Beyond these royal offers, however, there is not much evidence regarding Antiochos Hierax's communication with other groups in Asia Minor, such as the Greek cities. I have mentioned earlier that no inscription can be connected to Antiochos Hierax's reign with certainty, and while Antiochos Hierax was able to retain to a certain degree good relations with those cities in western Asia Minor that had been previously under Seleukid control, it appears that in the long run, the military defeats against the Attalid king destroyed his royal authority. The lack of evidence of royal communication in the Hellespont and the Troad, where most of the usurper's coinage was minted, is surprising. The temple of Athena Ilias displayed quite a number of Seleukid letters and decrees, but interestingly no Seleukid documents survive after c.240.¹¹⁹ Would the economic centre and the estate of Laodike in the region not imply some degree of royal communication and interaction between these cities and King Antiochos?¹²⁰ Of course a lack of surviving evidence might be accidental, but if the activities of the Ilian Confederacy can be dated so high into the third century,¹²¹ it shows how eager these cities were to display their independence, and that it was possible to do so. While it is tempting to argue that perhaps this is the impression we should obtain from Antiochos Hierax's kingship, two elements are of vital importance: the duration of his reign and the limitations of the royal descent.

Despite the negative evidence with regard to Antiochos Hierax's rule, he reigned for a considerable period of time. His position as a real power in Asia Minor is confirmed by alliances with other rulers. His royal standing encouraged Mithridates II to break his alliance with Seleukos II. Presumably in the period after the final defeat of Seleukos II, Antiochos Hierax secured an alliance with Ziaelas of

¹¹⁹ SEG 41. 1048 (*I.Ilion* 35) and SEG 41. 1049 (*I.Ilion* 36) with Piejko 1991 which seem to be two decrees (maybe connected) concerning Seleukos, Laodike, and her sons. It is the last document concerning the Seleukid family. SEG 41. 1050 (*I.Ilion* 38) is too damaged to make assumptions on the ruler mentioned on the stone: *contra* Piejko 1991: 122–6 no. 3.

¹²⁰ For the estate: Wiegand 1904: 275–8; Sekunda 1988: 186–7; Ramsey forthcoming.

¹²¹ See ch. 2.1b, n. 56.

Bithynia and married his daughter, thereby connecting himself to other dynasts in the region. He possibly led successful campaigns through northern Phrygia, and he was able to drive out Ptolemaic units from the Hellespont and Thrace. Most of the surviving coinage from the Hellespont comes from the period of the mid-230s, and it is conceivable that this was the peak of Antiochos Hierax's kingship.

Antiochos Hierax was able to organize an army, engage the troops against the Seleukid king, and fight numerous battles in Asia Minor. The ancient accounts regarding his communication with his Galatian allies, however, not only underline their valour, but also question the loyalty of these troops. We should note that Antiochos Hierax and his Galatian allies apparently had different interests after the battle at Ankyra (Just. *Epit.* 27. 2. 11), and Porphyrios (perhaps describing the same event) writes that Antiochos Hierax was 'attacked' in Greater Phrygia (*FGrHist* 260 F32. 8). Descriptions of Galatian disobedience are also found in Polybios, who also noted that at some point Attalos I could not motivate his Galatian troops (Pol. 5. 78. 1–5), and while the sources clearly seem to indicate that Antiochos Hierax had difficulty in gaining acceptance as king in his communication with some of his Galatians troops, Galatian disobedience was not only connected with Antiochos Hierax. Moreover, Porphyrios mentioned the betrayal of Antiochos' courtiers. No matter how we read these narratives, the accounts suggest that although Antiochos Hierax's rule was not uncontested, he nevertheless remained king.

Between the early 230s and 228/7 Antiochos was able to establish himself as an independent ruler in northern Asia Minor, as the coins issued by the royal mints indicate. While the Attalid monuments indicate Antiochos Hierax's success in pushing Attalos I close to the city of Pergamon, and challenging him there in a battle, they also illustrate his defeats. The success of Attalos I of Pergamon prevented Antiochos Hierax from extending his influence.¹²² Antiochos presumably lost the city of Sardeis after the defeat at Koloē, and Attalos I cut him off from his northern possessions. Thus, he was reduced to a commander without a sphere of influence. It was these continuous defeats, along with Antiochos' inability to securely hold the one region that had formed his economic centre, which marked the end to his kingship. The march beyond the Tauros is an indication

¹²² On the Attalid 'war machine': Ma 2013.

that Seleukos II faced problems in the eastern parts of the empire, as described in Justin (*Epit.* 41. 5. 1). It further illustrates that Antiochos Hierax had to campaign in order to maintain his royal acceptance and to retain his kingship. His march into Syria was intended to secure his position as a successful military leader. The attempt, however, failed.

The success of Antiochos Hierax's opponents provides the best commentary on his reign. His initial military successes were shattered after his defeats against Attalos I. While it could be argued that the negative tone in the accounts of the usurper has influenced our perception of his achievements, the themes of discord with his mercenaries, the lack of victories, and the success of Attalid ventures nevertheless indicate the limits of Antiochos Hierax's success. Despite his reign of more than ten years and his strong association with the royal Seleukid family, the defeats against the Attalid king destroyed his kingship. Antiochos Hierax became king as a son of Antiochos II, yet he was not able to retain the control of Asia Minor. His royal descent had allowed him to become king at a relatively young age, and he enjoyed initial success against both Ptolemaic and Seleukid troops, but neither his royal pedigree nor these early achievements prevented the later defection of his troops or impeded Attalid expansion.

2.2b Kingship by Success: Achaïos

Achaïos' position in Asia Minor before his usurpation was based on his close relationship with both Seleukos III and the new king, Antiochos III, his *syngenes* (Pol. 4. 48. 5). At the time of his accession, Antiochos III doubtless needed a successful commander in Asia Minor, and Achaïos' experience, kinship with the kings, and his loyalty when he rejected the diadem himself were presumably reasons for his appointment as chief administrator of Asia Minor. Achaïos was militarily successful. He fought in the name of the Seleukid king in Asia Minor, and recovered lost territories. Achaïos was able to re-establish Sardeis as the Seleukid capital of Asia Minor, and push back Attalos I from his former occupied land. In parts of Phrygia he re-established Seleukid control. He was perhaps even supported by other agents, such as the local dynast Lysias, who had fought against the Attalids in the name of Seleukos III (*OGIS* 277).¹²³ After Achaïos'

¹²³ Published as separate entries in *I.Pergamon* 25–6.

usurpation, the Maiander valley may have come back under Seleukid control, and he continued to affirm his control in Pamphylia.

The motivation for Achaïos' usurpation, however, should be seen not only as a result of his military campaigns in Asia Minor, but also arising from the dynamics among the friends of the young Antiochos III. The usurpation of Molon only two years prior to that of Achaïos is instructive, and thus worth a brief note. Molon had been satrap of Media; I would also argue that at the accession of Antiochos III he had been appointed to the position of the commander of the Upper Satrapies.¹²⁴ Apart from stressing the wealth of the satrapy of Media (Pol. 5. 43. 8)¹²⁵ and the youth of the king, Polybios emphasizes Molon's hope for Achaïos' support, and the cruelty and malice of Hermeias as one of the main reasons for Molon's secession (Pol. 5. 41. 1). Polybios' focus on three individuals (Achaïos, Antiochos III, and Hermeias) as the reason for revolt is striking. We already find Achaïos active under Seleukos II (Polyain. 4. 17). Hermeias, Seleukos III's *ὁ ἐπὶ τῶν πραγμάτων*, his chancellor, had also surely been a high-ranking official under Seleukos II. Polybios' emphasis on the prominent position among the troops of a fourth high courtier, Epigenes, indicates that the latter was an experienced commander (Pol. 5. 41. 4 and 5. 50. 8). Instead of reading Polybios' passage as an indicator of future relations between these individuals, it seems more fruitful to read it as a depiction of the current court situation at the accession of Antiochos III.¹²⁶ Molon, Achaïos, Hermeias, and Epigenes simply sought to establish (and maintain) themselves as high-ranking *philoi* under Seleukos III, and the death of the king meant a new renegotiation of their political position. If any credibility can be given to Appian's account that Seleukos III was murdered by his *philoi* (Syr. 66 [348]),¹²⁷ it illustrates the tensions among the same individuals, and highlights the fact that accession was dangerous not only for the king's friends, but also for the king. The revolts of both Molon and Achaïos must be placed in the critical moment of the making of a new king's court: in the context of Antiochos III's accession to the Seleukid

¹²⁴ Even if he is not attested with the title: see also ch. 4.1a.

¹²⁵ For Media's resources, see also ch. 1.1b.

¹²⁶ Will 1962; cf. Strootman 2011: 72–4. See also Ramsey 2011: 47–9.

¹²⁷ See, however, Brodersen, *BAS*: 207 who suggests that this information might not rely on any other account.

diadem, and in the reshaping of the hierarchy among the royal friends.¹²⁸

While the language of official royal correspondence suggests that the Seleukid kings made the decisions in their kingdom,¹²⁹ the importance of the royal *philoï* cannot be overestimated.¹³⁰ The public perception of their importance is, for example, illustrated in their inclusion in honours for Antiochos I by Ilion (*OGIS* 219. 22). Yet the mention of the *philoï* in the honours from Ilion is not only part of the very early empire, it is also rare. It was the Seleukid king who chose his agents personally, and it was this act that ensured their loyalty. Although from the succession from Seleukos I to Antiochos I and Antiochos II a certain hereditary charisma was ascribed to the ruling king, the royal agents or friends did not become a hereditary group.¹³¹ The *philoï*'s social and economic status continued to be dependent on their relationship with the king. It was this group the king employed as his envoys, local governors, and commanders, and they supported the king in his decision-making.¹³² The royal *philoï* were crucial for the administration of the empire, but it was the king who decided who was a royal friend.

Some royal friends were very closely linked to the Seleukid kings, as the example of Achaïos' family demonstrates. The genealogy of his family, and in particular its connection with the Seleukid royal house, has seen extensive discussion. Droysen and Beloch argue that the usurper Achaïos was the uncle of Antiochos III, a view that has been since convincingly challenged.¹³³ Polybios states that Laodike, the sister of Andromachos (and probably the daughter of Achaïos the

¹²⁸ On the Seleukid court: e.g. Strootman 2011 and Strootman 2014. On the dynamics of the Antigonid court: Ma 2011.

¹²⁹ Cf. Herman 1980–1.

¹³⁰ On Friends: e.g. Capdetrey 2007: 277–9; Carsana 1996; Habicht 1958; Mehl 2003; Savalli-Lestrade 1998; Savalli-Lestrade 2003; G. Weber 1997; Virgilio 2003: 131–91. Grainger 1997 collects material that is often useful. At times, however, the scholarship he relies on is out of date.

¹³¹ M. Weber 1980: 141–5.

¹³² Variety of duties: Savalli-Lestrade 1998: 355–9; see also Hatzopoulos 1996: 323–37; council to the king: e.g. Pol. 18. 7. 3–4; Pol. 29. 27. 1–8; also RC 61; Habicht 1958: 2–4. Strootman 2014 in particular in his chs 5 and 6 creates a different image of the Seleukid court. His interpretation, however, seems to be strongly influenced by the Antigonid and Ptolemaic evidence.

¹³³ Beloch 1912–27: IV.1 205; challenged by Corradi 1927: 221; cf. Wilcken 1891: 206–7. See, however, D'Agostini forthcoming.

Elder), was the wife of Seleukos II,¹³⁴ and thus offers a possible reconstruction of the family's links to the Seleukid royal house. Achaïos the Elder, mentioned in the inscription from Denizli, was landlord of an estate in the area of Laodikeia on the Lykos. He appears to have had a son named Andromachos and a daughter named Laodike, who married Seleukos II. Andromachos' son, Achaïos, assumed the diadem in 220. The wife of Antiochos II and her brother Alexander were the children of a certain Achaïos, who was no doubt related to the same family, and may have been an uncle of the elder Achaïos.¹³⁵

The family had an estate in the fertile Lykos valley, large enough to have its own *oikonomos* and *eklogistēs*,¹³⁶ and had over generations established a relationship with the royal family. Two daughters in the family had married a reigning monarch, and the Seleukid foundation Laodikeia was named after the queen of Antiochos II. This was important on a local level as it was named after a member of the Achæan family. Until Achaïos the Younger's death, members of the family twice served as Seleukid administrators of Asia Minor: Alexander under Antiochos II, and Achaïos under Antiochos III. Although at least one member of Achaïos' family turned against Seleukos II and supported (at least for some time) his brother Antiochos Hierax, Seleukos II continued to rely on members of the family in the battle against Antiochos Hierax: Achaïos and his father Andromachos. Achaïos' father Andromachos was an important figure and was held hostage by the Ptolemies for a long period of time.¹³⁷ And finally, Achaïos, *οἰκέτης* of the king, accompanied Seleukos III on his very important campaign to Asia Minor. In summary, although these royal friends always had to renegotiate their relationship with the new Seleukid ruler, they nevertheless could hold very prominent positions in a young king's kingdom.

Polybios' continuous narrative in book five reveals the position of powerful friends of former kings in the context of the accession of a young king. Antiochos III 'inherited' a number of powerful friends who held the most important offices in the empire. In contrast to the

¹³⁴ Pol. 4. 51. 4; see also Pol. 8. 20. 11.

¹³⁵ Schmitt 1964: 31; cf. Meloni 1949; Meloni 1950.

¹³⁶ See Wörrle 1975: 81–4; Billows 1995: 97–8.

¹³⁷ Pol. 4. 51. 1–5. It is not clear when Andromachos was taken hostage. The campaigns in Kilikia Pedias might be a possibility.

established friends of the former king, the king himself was young and likely inexperienced. Seleukos III had only recently become king, and perhaps nobody expected Antiochos III to inherit the diadem. If the arrival of a certain Ly[sias?], a brother of Seleukos III, at Seleukeia on the Tigris (*BCHP* 12. 11–15) attests the name of Antiochos III before his accession, one could hypothesize that neither Seleukos III, whose name had been Alexander (Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F32. 9), nor Antiochos III were immediately promoted as Seleukos II's successor—placing Antiochos III at the very end of a possible line of succession.¹³⁸ While intriguing, this is in the end speculative. Yet beyond speculation it is in the context of his accession that we should see the conflict between Antiochos III and his inherited friends who were attempting to renegotiate their relationship with the king.

The position of Hermeias and his conflict with Epigenes should be understood as a competition for influence over the young king at the time of the regime change. Polybios' narrative reveals the themes of the period:¹³⁹ Hermeias was 'jealous of all the holders of prominent positions at court' ... ἐφθόνει τοῖς ἐν ὑπεροχαῖς οὖσι τῶν περὶ τὴν αὐλήν (Pol. 5. 41. 3); he 'forged' encouraging letters between Ptolemaios IV and Achaïos which led to a war against Egypt (Pol. 5. 42. 7), and he 'forged' another letter between Molon and Epigenes which resulted in Epigenes' execution (Pol. 5. 50. 11–13). These passages underline Hermeias' attempt to outdo his opponents, and to alienate other powerful friends from the king. The secession of Molon and Achaïos also should be interpreted in this light. The murder of Hermeias soon after the end of Molon's revolt (Pol. 5. 56. 1–15) is a further example of the Seleukid king's attempts to rid himself of friends who were too powerful. Perhaps Molon saw his secession as a last chance to retain his position. It is impossible to ascertain whether Antiochos III was already involved in the 'early' conflict between Hermeias or Epigenes, or if this should be interpreted strictly as a power struggle among competitive courtiers. Nevertheless, the death of Hermeias illustrates the active part of the king to remain the

¹³⁸ Mehl 1999: 25–6 on similar questions regarding Mithridates/Antiochos IV.

¹³⁹ That Polybios' narrative followed an account concerning the downfall of the chancellor, revealed through the passages concerning Hermias' death, is interesting, but leaves the following themes unaffected: cf. Primo 2009: 137–9; see also Ramsey 2011: 48–9.



Fig. 2.5 Tetradrachm of Achaïos, mint Sardeis, c.220–213 BCE, Gemini I, 11–12 January 2005, lot 204. Reproduced by kind permission of Harlan J. Berk, Ltd.

most powerful individual in his kingdom, and that the monarch could not tolerate any serious competitor for power and prestige. The tension between competing courtiers as well as a king who had to assert his position also placed Achaïos' future in jeopardy. Achaïos seized his opportunity to make himself king given his experience and correct judgement that the Seleukid king would not cross the Tauros immediately.

After Achaïos 'ventured to take the title of king' in Laodikeia on the Lykos (Pol. 5. 57. 5), he introduced a distinct royal portrait to his new coinage (Fig. 2.5). In doing so, he acted in stark contrast to Antiochos Hierax before him, but in a very similar way to his contemporary Molon. The number of surviving coins is not large, but since they all derive from different issues, they represent a substantial volume.¹⁴⁰

A man, presumably the king, is depicted on the obverse of Achaïos' precious-metal coinage. The portrait is shown in profile looking to the right. He has short curly hair that does not cover the diadem. The diadem is visibly bound around the head and knotted at the back. The portrait wears a short-cropped beard with small curls, and it shows strong lines on the forehead and next to the nose. A *chlamys* can be identified on the bottom of the bust. The reverse of the stater and the tetradrachm contain the legend βασιλεὺς Ἀχαιῶς in the genitive form. The main iconographic element on the reverse is an image of Athena Alkis, advancing to the left, brandishing her spear and shield. The

¹⁴⁰ Gold stater: SC 952. Silver denomination: SC 953; Ad199–200. Bronze coinage: SC 954–9; SC 954 (Zeus/Athena); 955–7; Ad201–3 (Apollo/eagle); 958 (Apollo/Tripod); 959 (Apollo/horse head). For the portrait: Fleischer 1991: 40.



Fig. 2.6 Drachm of Philip V, mint unknown c.220–179 BCE, ANS 1944.100.14047. Courtesy of the American Numismatic Society.

shield is embossed with an inverted kedge anchor, with an eagle sitting on the anchor's arms.¹⁴¹ Between the figure of Athena and the legend, there is a horse's head, which could be a mintmark. The bronze issues show one obverse of Zeus paired with Athena Alkis on the reverse and three issues of a laureate Apollo (obverse), one with an eagle, one with a tripod, and the smallest one with a horse head on the reverse.

A. Houghton interpreted the tetradrachms as stylistically and typologically influenced by the coinage of Philip V of Macedon (Fig. 2.6). Achaïos has a very strong neck and the *chlamys*—the military cloak—provides the portrait with a strong military connotation, which is absent from Philip V's issues.¹⁴² Achaïos' portrait seems to have been designed in deliberate contrast to Seleukid portraits. There are no other bearded portraits of a Seleukid king in Asia Minor, and the *chlamys* was not a common element on Seleukid coinage thus far.¹⁴³ Since the death of Antiochos II in 246, the kings depicted themselves in young idealized styles; the late issues of Seleukos II are an exception. Both Antiochos Hierax and Seleukos II were young when they became king, as was Antiochos III at the time of Achaïos' usurpation; however, the emphasis on 'softer features' of the

¹⁴¹ Hirmer's photograph clearly shows the depiction of the eagle (Hirmer and Franke 1972: pl. 205, p. 152). The eagle was omitted in SC 953 and WSM 1440.

¹⁴² For other issues featuring the portrait of Philip V: e.g. SNG Cop.Mace III 1230–3.

¹⁴³ In Mesopotamia, in the context of the Parthian campaign, Seleukos II depicted himself with a beard and a *chlamys*: (Persian beard: SC 685–6. Greek beard: SC 749–50). Perhaps he also employed the Greek beard to underline his age in comparison to his younger brother.



Fig. 2.7 Tetradrachm of Antiochos III, mint perhaps Laodikeia by the Sea, 222–187 BCE, CSE II 245. Courtesy of Arthur Houghton.

kings seems not only to be determined by the age of the rulers. Rather it is a theme of the period.¹⁴⁴ Following this trend, Antiochos III is depicted in Antiocheia, the cities of western Asia Minor, southern Kilikia, and in the Levant in an idealized but youthful manner in the period before and during Achaïos' rule (Fig. 2.7).¹⁴⁵ Achaïos does not utilize this trend in Seleukid iconography. Achaïos' portrait has a muscular neck and a receding hairline, as if to allow sufficient space to display strong lines on his forehead. Thus, while he was surely older than the reigning king, his coinage places a distinct emphasis on maturity in response to the current royal coinage.

There are secondary symbols on the coins that subtly refer to the Seleukid house (to which he was a relative), such as the Seleukid anchor. Apart from mintmarks, these elements could stress the continuity of the minting authority in order to underline the validity of his coinage. The three main symbols on his coins mark a break with the traditional Seleukid imagery: his portrait, Athena Alkis, and the legend on the reverse. His royal portrait differs significantly from previous Seleukid images. He is displayed as a military man, signified by the cloak, at an older age, referring to an image of political

¹⁴⁴ Fleischer 1996: 31.

¹⁴⁵ The youthful portrait types Ai and Aii are now dated between 222 and 211: SC i.1 pp. 358–60; cf. Le Rider 1999: 110–31 and 163–4. The portrait from Antiocheia on the Orontes and northern Syria is particularly instructive: SC 1037; 1041–2. Evidence of Antiochos III's coins from Asia Minor is sparse, and it is difficult to date them to the period before Achaïos' death. Nevertheless, they depict the youthful portrait, see e.g. perhaps Mysia: SC 961; 963; perhaps Ionia: SC 965; Phrygian Mint: SC 989, 990; perhaps Apameia: SC 1000–1; Tarsos and Tarsian mint: SC 1025–6, 1032, 1035; Antiocheia on the Orontes: SC 1037, 1041–2. The youthful portrait was no longer employed in Asia Minor after the sack of Sardeis.

leadership that was prominent in the fourth century, before its transformation in the context of the campaigns of Alexander, and their aftermath.¹⁴⁶ The break is more than obvious in his royal name, which is a reference not to the family (and relations) who placed him in charge of Asia Minor, but rather to a family with possessions in the region and involved in the administration of Seleukid Asia Minor. This distancing from the Seleukid kings is corroborated by the use of Athena Alkis on the reverse of Achaïos' precious coinage in contrast to the Seleukid use of Apollo. Mentioned by Livy as one of the goddesses of Pella to which the Antigonid kings performed their sacrifice (42. 51. 1–2), the goddess was used continuously by the Antigonid kings as well as by Ptolemaios I, Pyrrhos of Epirus, and later the Baktrian kings.¹⁴⁷ Athena Alkis was a reference to Pella, the Argead kings, and to Macedonia in general. Similarities with the coinage of Philip V do not therefore constitute a reference to the Antigonid ruler. Instead, the concerns of Achaïos' imagery were the same as those of the imagery of Philip V: fourth-century kingship, Macedonia, and Pella. It is likely that—just as Ptolemaios I, Pyrrhos, the Baktrian kings, and the Antigonids—Achaïos tried to insert his (probably Macedonian) family into the Macedonian descendants of Alexander's campaign. The fact that nearly all Seleukid bronze issues with Athena Alkis were minted in Seleukid colonies, most of them in the east, further underlines this reference to Macedon.¹⁴⁸

The anchor on the shield of Athena Alkis is a reference to Seleukos I and the signet ring of the Seleukid royal family. Several myths regarding the anchor exist and it was used on Seleukid coinage.¹⁴⁹ Strikingly, it is depicted on the shield that Athena holds up to protect

¹⁴⁶ On 'naturalism' as a specific style of the fourth century: von den Hoff 2007.

¹⁴⁷ Antigonids: *SNG Cop.Mace* III 1198–1203; 1244–6. Ptolemaios I: Svoronos 32–5. Pyrrhos of Epiros: *SNG Cop.Epirus* 92–4. Baktrian kings: Bopearachchi 1991: 'Ménandre (I) Sôter' nos. 11–149. Most Antigonid coins show Athena Alkis preparing to throw a bundle of lightning. The coins of Achaïos, as well as the coins of Ptolemaios I and Pyrrhos, depict her with a spear.

¹⁴⁸ Two bronze coins from Tarsus during the reign of Antiochos II are an exception (SC 565–6). Otherwise: Seleukos I: SC 15–17 (Antiocheia on the Orontes). Antiochos I: SC 381–7 (Seleukeia on the Tigris). Antiochos II: SC 604 (Susa). Antiochos III: SC possibly 1183 and Ad37.

¹⁴⁹ The signet ring of Seleukos I: App. Syr. 56 (284–7). Anchor on coinage: Seleukos I: SC 34; 134; 145–6; 188–90; 223; 267–8; 271. Co-regency between Seleukos I and Antiochos I: SC 285–9. Antiochos I: SC 359; 359A; 376–7; 408A. Seleukos II: SC 663; 756–8. (Perhaps) Antiochos III: SC 1294. For the anchor in foundation myths: Ogden 2011.



Fig. 2.8 Tetradrachm of Molon, mint Seleukeia/Tigris c.222–220 BCE, Archäologisches Museum der Universität Münster, Inv. L 2. Fischer 1988: 15 C. Courtesy of Archäologisches Museum der Universität Münster, Photograph: Robert Dylka.

herself when brandishing the spear. Moreover, the anchor is topped with an eagle, which is also depicted on the reverse of some of the bronze coins of Achaïos and might be a local reference to the sanctuary of Zeus Genethlios (the protector) in Sardeis.¹⁵⁰ Although reference to Seleukid elements is made, their arrangements on Achaïos' coinage clearly create a new and different image.

This image of differentiation can also be seen in the coinage of Achaïos' contemporary Molon, and again, a brief comparison is fruitful. In contrast to the Seleukid issues of the young Antiochos III and previous Seleukid royal images, Molon issued a carefully executed portrait, although only one tetradrachm survives (Fig. 2.8).¹⁵¹ The coin depicts the portrait of a mature but youthful man. The hair is much longer and therefore wavier than contemporary images of the Seleukid kings. The portrait has a very straight nose, strong gaze, small lips, a slight double chin, and a slightly enlarged ear. On the reverse a *tropaion* is depicted, suggesting the commemoration of a battle (Fig. 2.8), very similar to a *tropaion* on the reverses of the bronze coinage of Seleukos II from Seleukeia on the Tigris (SC 776–8). Achaïos and Molon, the royal names of the usurpers, further underscore the distinctive break with contemporary Seleukid patterns.

¹⁵⁰ SC 955–7; Ad201–3. For Zeus Genethlios: SEG 39. 1284 B. 13.

¹⁵¹ Fischer 1988: 17 suggests that the coin is an overstrike; I was not able to verify this from inspecting the coin, which is now part of the collection of the archaeological museum of the Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster.

With these distinct symbols on their coinage, Achaïos and Molon ensured that their soldiers were presented with (and could not forget) their special claim to kingship. The choice of imagery on their coinage suggests that the royal claims of both Molon and Achaïos were grounded in their military success. Although one could argue that the political effect of the coinage might have been limited,¹⁵² this would not explain the differences between the types used by the usurpers and those of the dynasty that they challenged. The stress on differences was a conscious act of image-making, and formed part of the usurpers' royal offers. For the troops of Achaïos, for example, this differentiation did not constitute a problem. They had already wanted to acclaim Achaïos king in 222 after he avenged the death of Seleukos III, and they continued to follow him after he made himself king in Laodikeia. The troops' affection for their commander should lead us to question Polybios' observation that they hesitated in their support when appearing to undertake a campaign against their 'king by nature' (*κατὰ φύσιν*; Pol. 5. 57. 6). This should be interpreted as a later rewriting of the usurper's history. We do not know what kind of troops Achaïos recruited in Asia Minor. Although he apparently arrived with a considerable force, he also received local contingents from the people of Etenna and Aspendos for his Pamphylian campaign. Mysian mercenaries and Galatian swordsmen also might have been available; in the same period Attalos I also hired Galatian mercenaries (Pol. 5. 77. 2 and 78. 1–5).¹⁵³ The crucial point about Achaïos' troops, however, is that he seems to have been able to employ them in continuous engagements against the Attalid king. Even when the Seleukid king besieged Sardeis, desertion is not part of Polybios' narrative. It is the image of the general acceptance of Achaïos' kingship that also seems to be portrayed in Polybios' account of Pednelissos (5. 72. 1) and Byzantion (4. 48. 1–13) which both called on Achaïos for help.

Beyond his troops and communities in Asia Minor, for which there is limited evidence, Achaïos was able to ally himself with other rulers in Asia Minor. He married Laodike, the daughter of Mithridates II, the king of Pontos, when Achaïos was presumably already king (Pol. 8. 20. 11). We do not know whether Mithridates III had already

¹⁵² For a note on this approach, see n. 50 of the Introduction.

¹⁵³ Cf. Mittag 2008: 49–50.

succeeded Mithridates II.¹⁵⁴ It was presumably in this period that the Pontic king failed to take the city of Sinope (Pol. 4. 56), and witnessed Achaïos' success in Asia Minor against Attalos I. An alliance with Achaïos as a new power in Asia Minor must have been welcome. A connection with the Pontic dynasty was presumably also an advantage for Achaïos, and placed him among royal peers.

Achaïos' usurpation is instructive in three ways in particular: first, Achaïos had been appointed chief administrator of Asia Minor because of his relationship with the king and former kings. Even after his usurpation it appears that he was not perceived as a plundering warlord: he was approached by cities, such as Byzantion and Pednelissos, to come to their aid. The punishment of Sardeis also might suggest that the city initially supported the usurper; and these limited testimonies offer some insight into the success of his royal offers. Second, Achaïos was an able military commander. He had a strong connection with his troops, as illustrated in Polybios' accounts of his military successes and his troops' attempts to acclaim him king from as early as 222. Moreover, his troops do not seem to have deserted him. In Polybios' account, both the lower city of Sardeis and the usurper himself are taken by treason, not through defection. One of course could argue that Achaïos was a cousin of the king and that this helped him claim the diadem. However, as I have detailed in this section, Achaïos did not place an explicit stress on his Seleukid ancestry on his coinage. Instead he established his own imagery. His royal name and image was an individual reference to his kingship based in Asia Minor. Third, the narratives concerning Achaïos' kingship show the impermanence of conquest. The 'taking' of territories only demanded a strong army; rulers' structures were exchangeable. For this reason, Ptolemaios III had been able to 'take most of Asia' (whether exaggerated or not), and Achaïos could push back Attalos I. It was for exactly the same reason that Molon had been able to 'take' Babylon swiftly. It is this context that we need to bear in mind when interpreting the campaign of Antiochos III against Achaïos; Seleukid manpower was reinforced by a *koinopragia* with Attalos I.

¹⁵⁴ Pontic kings: scholarship so far has assumed that Mithridates II died around 220. If he was still alive when his daughter married Achaïos, this might push the date of his death to the 210s. There is only sparse evidence for Mithridates III. See Geyer 1932; McGing 1986a: 253–5; Walbank, *HCP* II: 96. For a new interpretation: Petković 2009.

2.2c Usurpers and the Ptolemaic Kings

The Ptolemaic kings played a large role in the power politics of Asia Minor during this period, and, unsurprisingly, the Ptolemaic kings had a certain interest in the usurpers. How to ascertain this interest, however, is far more difficult. The evidence for Antiochos Hierax is confusing. While he was initially placed in Asia Minor to oppose Ptolemaic expansion, Porphyrios writes that Ptolemaios III sent troops (*auxiliaribus*) to the usurper when he found refuge at Magnesia after the defeat of the troops of Seleukos II (*FGrHist* 260 F32. 8). After his final defeat, Justin suggests that Antiochos Hierax also sought out Ptolemaic help (*Epit.* 27. 3. 9–11). Yet inbetween these two episodes, Antiochos Hierax's activities, and in particular those in the Troad, must have contradicted Ptolemaic interests, and Ptolemaios III may have stopped supporting the usurper once Seleukos II was no longer a threat in Asia Minor.

The interpretation of Achaïos' relationship with the Ptolemaic king is also uncertain.¹⁵⁵ Achaïos had come to Asia Minor to reclaim the Seleukid territories. Polybios presents this as a campaign against Attalos I (Pol. 4. 48. 7), and does not mention the Ptolemaic king. Yet Ptolemaic presence on the coast of western Asia Minor is undeniable,¹⁵⁶ and it is difficult to imagine how the Ptolemaic king could be interested in a strong military commander who redrew the map of Seleukid Asia Minor. The Byzantines' call to Achaïos for help, as well as the Ptolemaic king's release of Achaïos' father Andromachos that ended Achaïos' involvement in the conflict between Byzantium and Rhodes (Pol. 4. 48. 1–2 and 51. 1–6), are clearly indicative of these tensions: Achaïos was perceived as powerful, and in this instance the Ptolemaic king could persuade the new king not to take part in these affairs.

Achaïos' position as part of Ptolemaic–Seleukid relations, however, is revealing, and this might also give us a template regarding Antiochos Hierax's interaction with the Ptolemies. Polybios' narrative mentions a forged letter sent by the Ptolemaic king to Achaïos encouraging him to secede (Pol. 5. 42. 7–9). It is unclear what this

¹⁵⁵ Schmitt 1964: 166–71.

¹⁵⁶ See the prelude of ch. 2. It is of course possible that Polybios here retrojects the later Attalid–Seleukid conflict into a mid-third-century context.

story reveals about the real relationship between Achaïos and Ptolemaios IV, but the intervention may have seemed plausible and concerning for the Seleukid king.¹⁵⁷ Ptolemaic interest in Achaïos was articulated explicitly when Ptolemaios IV wished to include him in the negotiations during the Fourth Syrian War (Pol. 5. 67. 12–13). At this point, Ptolemaios IV did not know how the war would end, and he might have been interested in a potential ally if the war turned into a fiasco. Yet since Achaïos was apparently no longer part of the negotiations after Ptolemaios IV had won the Battle of Raphia, this perhaps reveals the limited extent of Ptolemaic interest.

If we combine these seemingly paradoxical positions, it appears that the Ptolemaic king was interested in a usurper who could continue the internal strife within the Seleukid kingdom, and thus busy the Seleukid king with internal affairs. Beyond the rescue of Achaïos from Sardeis with Ptolemaic money, Polybios also alludes to a Seleukid fear of Ptolemaic troops at the siege of Sardeis. He narrates how in order to keep the plan of attack on the city of Sardeis a secret, Lagoras told his soldiers that they were to prepare against the Aitolians, who had to be prevented from entering the city (Pol. 7. 16. 7). Regardless of whether these Aitolians were fictitious or real, they presumably should be seen as Ptolemaic mercenaries.¹⁵⁸ These episodes, Achaïos' attempted rescue by Ptolemaic agents, and his inclusion in the initial peace negotiations between Ptolemaios IV and Antiochos III perhaps most clearly suggest a Ptolemaic interest in usurpers in order to prolong discord within the Seleukid kingdom—and perhaps this is also indicative for the reign of Antiochos Hierax.

Even if individual Ptolemaic reactions to the claims of Antiochos Hierax and Achaïos might have differed, it seems that the support that both usurpers received from the Ptolemaic kings was strongly influenced by the Ptolemies' relationship with the Seleukid monarch, and the damage the usurpers' caused to Seleukid authority in Asia Minor. The evidence suggests that Achaïos (and possibly Antiochos Hierax as well) received Ptolemaic support at times when their own position in Asia Minor was threatened, and perhaps Seleukos II's grants to Arados mentioned in Strabo were intended to

¹⁵⁷ See ch. 2.1c.

¹⁵⁸ They might not even be fictitious, as the use of the article indicates that they have been mentioned earlier in the narrative. See Walbank, *HCP* II: 65; Holleaux 1942c. Both, however, interpret them as Achaïos' own troops.

counterbalance the Ptolemaic promotion of Antiochos Hierax in the southern Levant (Strab. 16. 2. 14).¹⁵⁹ Nevertheless, we should not place too much emphasis on this support, as the relationship between the usurpers and the Ptolemaic kings was strained by their rival claims to territory in western Asia Minor. Antiochos Hierax in particular must have enlarged his territories by taking Ptolemaic possessions, and even if Achaïos' activities did not reach western Karia and Lykia, he also was able to extend his sphere close to Ptolemaic territories. Achaïos' usurpation turned his Seleukid recovery into his own kingdom, and this was in the end more favourable to the Ptolemies than Seleukid stability.

For the Ptolemaic king, the usurpers in Asia Minor were more acceptable than strong Seleukid control; for them they were only one of the dynasts of Asia Minor (quite in contrast to the Seleukid understanding of them), and thus their presence among other dynasts led to a dispersal of power that in return could stabilize (or at least hinder the pressure on) Ptolemaic possessions in Asia Minor; perhaps they even served Ptolemaic interests to counter the expansion of other power-holders in the region. Most importantly, however, their usurpations demanded a military response from the Seleukid king, and that was their ultimate value.

2.3 ROYAL SUCCESS IN ASIA MINOR: THE LIMITS OF THE SELEUKID FAMILY

This chapter demonstrates the shifts of power in third-century Asia Minor: that of the Galatian tribes, and the potential and limitations of the local rulers of Pergamon (and marginally of the rulers of Bithynia and Pontos). It also illustrates the achievements and conflicts of the usurpers Antiochos Hierax and Achaïos. These third-century usurpers are instructive for two reasons. They allow an assessment of both the geopolitical landscape of the Seleukid kingdom in the mid/late third century, and the extent and limits of Seleukid control. They also enable us to begin to understand the concept of usurpation

¹⁵⁹ See ch. 2.2a, n. 94.

in itself: in other words, they illustrate who had the opportunity to become king in Asia Minor, and who had the ability to remain king.

The phenomenon of powerful political figures holding positions as royal administrators of Asia Minor was a distinctive Seleukid innovation, and despite the usurpations of the third century, it did not disappear after Achaïos' death. The resources of the diverse regions of Asia Minor, clearly defined geographically with the Mediterranean on its western and southern coasts, the Pontic Sea on the north coast, and the massive Tauros ridge, made it very powerful. This is perhaps most aptly visible in the Achaimenid establishment of two (and later four) powerful satraps at Sardeis and Daskyleion, who could hold each other in balance.¹⁶⁰ The position of Cyrus the Younger, who is depicted by Xenophon as *karanos* 'of all those who muster at Kastos' (Xen. *hell.* 1. 4. 3), was atypical, and it seems that for the Achaimenid kings, the resources of Asia Minor were too big to be entrusted to one individual alone. Seleukid Asia Minor looked slightly different: there were dynasts in some areas, in particular towards the north, and some regions were not part of Seleukid territories until the early second century. Nevertheless, direct control over the Ionian cities, the valleys of the Hermos and the Maiander, and over the trade routes along the common road, were crucial economic and political factors, and as such these regions were deemed vital for the Seleukid empire. To demonstrate royal presence and direct control over these areas, the Seleukid kings continued to have chief administrators in Asia Minor until the region north of the Tauros was no longer part of the empire, and this also holds true for the Upper Satrapies. After the fall of Sardeis, it was Zeuxis who held this office.¹⁶¹ His powers were reduced when the king was in Asia Minor (as the evidence for Alexander under Antiochos II also seems to indicate), yet they were as extensive as the powers of Achaïos before his usurpation during the long years of the king's absence.¹⁶²

¹⁶⁰ For a brief account: Hornblower 1994: 217–20; Klinkott 2005: 309–13 describes the phenomena, but draws no conclusions. Note also Briant 2002: 674–5.

¹⁶¹ Sardeis: in the first decree dated to 5 March 213 Zeuxis is mentioned in an official capacity: *SEG* 39. 1283 *ed. pr.* Gauthier 1989: no. 1; Ma 2002: 126; see also ch. 2.1c, n. 89. For Zeuxis: still Olshausen 1972. For later evidence of his power in the administration of Asia Minor: Ma 2002: 123–30. We already find him in the battle against Molon (e.g. *Pol.* 5. 45. 4).

¹⁶² Cf. Capdetrey 2007: 297 and 299, followed by Plischke 2014: 280.

Both usurpations were connected to the office the usurpers had held, and their prominence in the Seleukid hierarchy. The Seleukid kings retained control by favouring high power-holders who acknowledged the central authority. At the same time, this position allowed the administrators to obtain individual authority for themselves, underlining the structural necessity for the Seleukid king to give away power to highly connected individuals if he wanted to maintain it.¹⁶³ Both Antiochos Hierax and Achaïos were appointed to the government of Asia Minor in order to stabilize the political situation and ensure Seleukid domination over former Seleukid territories. Their connection to the royal family (and in the case of Achaïos also his connection to Asia Minor) perhaps made them good candidates for this role. However, to see the position of the chief administrator as the cause for the revolt of Antiochos Hierax and Achaïos would be too simplistic. Achaïos' usurpation also clearly demonstrates the importance of individual success. Achaïos had displayed his valour by revenging the death of the king, and he fought successful campaigns, claiming territories that had previously been under Seleukid control.

The marriages of both usurpers to daughters of kings in Asia Minor illustrate how powerful they had become. With the withdrawal of Seleukos II from Asia Minor, Antiochos Hierax was for the moment a victorious king. It was presumably in this context that Antiochos Hierax secured an alliance with the king of Bithynia and married his daughter, and it is likely that the Pontic king supported him. The latter clearly supported Achaïos at one point, when he had given him one of his daughters in marriage. Both usurpers were in Asia Minor with their armies. Seleukos II had lost control over the region west of the Tauros, and it was with Hierax that both Ziaelas of Bithynia and Mithridates II shared their borders. In the 220s the Pontic king had witnessed Achaïos' success in his campaigns against the Attalids before he took the diadem. The two new kings in Asia Minor could not be ignored, and the Pontic marriage of Achaïos presumably demonstrates a bilateral interest in stability in the region. If we follow Polybios, Prousius of Bithynia was concerned about Achaïos' activities (Pol. 5. 77. 1), and the Bithynian king's relationship with Achaïos seems to have been similar to that of

¹⁶³ For Hellenistic paradoxa: Ma 2008: 374.

Attalos I, who essentially for survival reasons had resisted the expansion of both Antiochos Hierax and Achaïos.

The reaction of the local power-holders towards the new kings is similarly reflected in the behaviour of the cities of Asia Minor. For Antiochos Hierax, the evidence does not allow any conclusions beyond the assumed support from Sardeis and certain other communities. Although Antiochos Hierax's mints were dominant in the Troad and the Hellespont, evidence of communication with the cities in the region is lacking. Byzantion and Pednelissos clearly called on Achaïos for help. The 'fear of the cities' about which Polybios writes (Pol. 5. 77. 2) should not be interpreted as an endemic friction between usurpers and cities. Instead, it should be seen as the cities' reaction to military campaigns, as it is also attested for campaigns of Antiochos III later in the period (Liv. 33. 38. 1–9).¹⁶⁴ While the taking and retaking of cities by Attalos I, Achaïos, Attalos I, and Achaïos in the years between 227 and 218 illustrates the political and economical instability of the period, these conquests also must be placed in their appropriate contexts. For a large part of the third century the coast of Asia Minor was under constant competition between the Seleukid, Ptolemaic, and later Attalid monarchs. The usurpers were only one additional element in this chain of structural instability, which was only briefly broken at the turn of the third century when most of the coastline of Asia Minor was under control of Antiochos III. We do not know whether groups within cities welcomed the usurpers.¹⁶⁵ Smyrna seemed eager to be independent, yet it still had to submit to Achaïos for a short period of time (Pol. 5. 77. 3–6), and it is impossible to ascertain whether we should ascribe this to mere conquest or to inner civic interest of support by the usurpers.¹⁶⁶

Beyond the geopolitical landscape, the usurpations of Antiochos Hierax and Achaïos illustrate the possibilities and limits of usurpation itself. Antiochos Hierax was a son of Antiochos II, and he emphasized this in his royal *persona*, which resembled a conglomeration of Seleukid features on his coinage. Yet while Antiochos Hierax had the same dynastic claim to the diadem as his brother, his kingship

¹⁶⁴ For cities and usurpers: Chrubasik 2012.

¹⁶⁵ Following Polyain. 8. 57 on the eve of the battle at Kouroupedion, the Lysimachid city of Ephesos was troubled by *οἱ σελευκίζοντες*, 'those doing things for Seleukos', who tore down the walls and opened the gates; as of yet the only attested form of the verb.

¹⁶⁶ On these questions, see ch. 4.2a.

collapsed. One could of course argue that he failed since he had usurped the territories of his elder brother, 'the rightful king,' and our literary accounts lead us in this direction; however, this necessitates a stress on the dynastic element of the Hellenistic kings that is probably not tenable (and this will be elaborated in chapters 4.1 and 5.1). Antiochos Hierax had defeated his brother at Ankyra, and he established a kingdom over which he ruled for a considerable period of time. Nevertheless, Attalos I worsened him in numerous battles. Antiochos Hierax's royal descent did not allow him to remain king nor did it give him an advantage over the Attalid ruler. His attempt to seize his opportunity in Mesopotamia towards the end of his reign was only a last straw. These dynamics are strikingly similar to those of the second century, which will be discussed in chapter 3.

The limits of Seleukid descent—so present in Antiochos Hierax's claims—are also mirrored in Achaïos' kingship; indeed they underline that dynastic descent did not matter to Achaïos. It was his position in Asia Minor, and his military successes against Attalos I in particular, that allowed him to assume the diadem in 220 with the support of his army. He created his own kingship. Achaïos did not attempt to gain acceptance as a 'Seleukid' king, and this is instructive. His choice of his own imagery, which amply stressed difference from the Seleukid house and the style of Seleukid iconography, and his political position (accepted by troops, cities, and dynasts), demonstrates the individual characteristics of Achaïos' royal offers and his kingship in general. For the troops, it was *his* success that mattered, and for this reason they fought for their king.

The death of usurpers can demonstrate the danger and potential of their kingships for the Seleukid king. Achaïos's death is a primary example of Seleukid policy towards usurpers in the third century, and should be interpreted alongside the mutilation of Molon in late 220. Molon's body only fell into the hands of Antiochos III after the usurper had committed suicide. Regardless, the king ordered his men to impale him *κατὰ τὸν ἐπιφανέστατον τόπον*, 'in the most conspicuous place', and the usurper's corpse was displayed at the foot the Zagros range on the road between Media and the West (Pol. 5. 54. 6–7). Achaïos was not only mutilated, he was decapitated, his head was sown into the skin of an ass, and his was body impaled (Pol. 8. 21. 3). Polybios' description of the execution lacks emotions or a feeling for vengeance: it was in the king's *synedrion* that the necessary punishment (*τίσι δέι... χρήσασθαι τιμωρίας*) was decided

after many proposals were heard (Pol. 8. 21. 2). The punishment was a public display, echoing Dareios I's inscriptions from Bisotun that state, for example, that the Great King displayed the mutilated rebel Fravartis in his palace before impaling him at Ekbatana (DB II 32; Bab. 25).¹⁶⁷ The display served to publicize the deconstruction of kingship and acceptance,¹⁶⁸ and underscored the Seleukid interpretation of this revolt.

Achaïos was not treated as a dynast who could be reinserted, such as Xerxes of Armenia; he had to be executed. Achaïos also was not a king to be kept in captivity, as Demetrios Poliorketes was under Seleukos I, nor were his ashes to be returned to his family.¹⁶⁹ Instead, Achaïos had successfully taken one of the core regions of the empire, and thus he could not be tolerated. The mutilation of his body was aimed to deconstruct his royal *persona* and thus his kingship, demarcating that following a Seleukid statement of facts he was a usurper. The harsh punishment was an acknowledgement of the power of these individuals. Achaïos, and to a lesser degree Molon, had been able to use their armies against the troops of the Seleukid king, and created their own kingdoms. Achaïos had been king for roughly six years. The kingships Antiochos Hierax, Molon, and Achaïos demonstrate that although the Seleukid kings had established a dynasty, even in the late third century being a member of that dynasty was not a prerequisite for kingship. The usurpers struck coinage with their own name, and their troops followed them. The display of both Achaïos' and Molon's impaled bodies served as a symbol of the power of the Seleukid king. Beyond that, it also was as a warning to his friends.

2.3a Between Family and Individuality

The death of Antiochos Hierax demonstrated both to the Seleukid kings and usurpers that the Seleukid dynasty was not a guarantee of

¹⁶⁷ The 'eastern' character of the punishment has also recently been summarized by Ehling 2007: 498; note also Kosmin 2014: 326 n. 84. *Ἀκρωτηριάζειν*, 'to cut off the extremities', is often interpreted with cutting off hands. While this is possible and perhaps referring to the hand Achaïos was fighting with (cf. 2 Makk. 15. 30–5), it probably refers to the mutilation of ears and nose.

¹⁶⁸ Jelito 1913; van Proosdij 1934; Fleischer 1972–5: 115; cf. Ehling 2007. Strootman 2014: 148–9 seems to suggest that this episode also serves to demonstrate punishment for abusing *philia*. The treason character nevertheless is quite prevalent.

¹⁶⁹ For Demetrios: Plut. *Dem.* 53. 2.

success. Antiochos III seems to have taken this lesson to heart, and strove to demonstrate his individual achievements. With his *anabasis* into the Upper Satrapies, he pre-empted all possible opposition from his successful military commanders and his *philoi* by placing himself on a footing with the greatest of all recent Macedonian kings, Alexander. This message of the *anabasis* was reiterated by Polybios, who stressed not only the eastern but also the western implications of the expedition, and argued that it was these successes that made the king worthy of his diadem (Pol. 11. 34. 16). It is not surprising that the king's letters underlined his descent from a long line of kings, that he referred to the affairs of Asia Minor under his grandfather (SEG 37. 1010 with 54. 1237), and that he heavily promoted the Seleukid ruler cult.¹⁷⁰ Antiochos III enforced the importance of the Seleukid dynasty and sought to equate it with his own personal power, thereby solidifying the image of Seleukid power. His efforts underline the evident limitations of the Seleukid family after the death of Seleukos II, and at the moment of his own accession.

Usurpers in third-century Asia Minor largely relied on their army and, more importantly, on the victories they achieved. Asia Minor was under constant competition. Ptolemaic units, individual cities, dynasts, and Attalos I are only a few of the actors on the stage of Asia Minor in this period who decided to support or resist Antiochos Hierax and Achaïos. The importance of the army is illustrated in the failure of Antiochos Hierax, who, despite his direct Seleukid lineage, was not able to remain king after military defeats. Achaïos stressed his connection to Asia Minor by making himself king in Laodikeia, thus presumably trying to underline the individuality of his royal authority. Achaïos was also able to communicate successfully with cities in his newly acquired territories, and neither his troops nor the cities seem to suggest that his kingship was not accepted: his royal offers were successful. The importance of Achaïos' success (and that of Molon as well) is illustrated in the accounts of their deaths. Both Achaïos and Molon were executed in a demonstrative fashion; a word of caution of what would happen to usurpers.

The parameters of usurpation in the third century before Antiochos III's *anabasis* into the eastern satrapies and his war against

¹⁷⁰ For the state cult: Robert and Robert 1983: 163–8; Kuhrt and Sherwin-White 1993: 209–10; Ma 2002: 356; van Nuffelen 2004; cf. Gehrke 1982: 269–70.

Rome were therefore based on a tension between authority from military success, and authority from Macedonian descent or a relationship to the Seleukid royal house. It will be demonstrated that while the political context of the second-century Seleukid state reflects important changes, this picture is nevertheless indicative for the empire throughout its duration.

Usurpers in the Levant and Beyond

The Second Century

The Hellenistic world of 160 BCE was very different from that of a hundred years earlier. A large number of these changes went beyond the drawing of a new political map, and the sheer scale and the novelty of ‘the coming of Rome’ is captured exemplarily in the motivation of the work of a keen observer of the period, Polybios of Megalopolis (Pol. 1. 1. 5–6).¹ The Seleukid kingdom also had developed, and administrative changes in Babylonia in particular reveal ‘a second phase’—a remodelling of Seleukid administrative structures in at least certain regions.² Yet one should not only see the period as a decisive break from the preceding centuries. While the Treaty of Apameia was a territorial blow to the Seleukid empire, financially, Roman indemnities, and the loss of Asia Minor seem to have been acceptable.³

Some of the outside pressures also were similar to the preceding period. Twenty years after Antiochos IV’s campaign into Egypt, the Ptolemaic kings were again powerful enough to reach within the Seleukid sphere, and were able to support centres of power other than the Seleukid king. The former Seleukid east also had an impact

¹ On Rome in the Eastern Mediterranean: still Gruen 1984; Eckstein 2008.

² e.g. Clancier 2012; Monerie 2012; Clancier and Monerie 2014; Feyel and Graslin-Thomé 2014. The latter volume in particular can stand as an example that the study of the second-century Seleukid empire is a very current topic. The proposed reconstruction of Honigman 2014: 316–77 also follows this model of a second phase.

³ Treaty: Pol. 21. 16–17 and 21. 41–3; Liv. 37. 44. 3–45. 21; 38. 38. 1–18; Diod. Sic. 29. 10 and 11; Memnon *FGrHist* 434 F18. 9; App. *Syr.* 38–9 (197–202); cf. Gruen 1984: 639–43. For the financial implications: Le Rider and de Callatay 2006: 199–207. For the physical payment of indemnities: Bauslaugh 1990: 58–9. For a continued relationship with Asia Minor: Chrubasik 2013: 105–16; Psoma 2013: 275–7.

on the Upper Satrapies: the growing strength of Eukratides of Baktria, and more importantly of Mithridates I of Parthia, gave a new twist to Seleukid politics during this period. At the same time, however, these pressures bear similarities to the previous century. Internally, local power-holders, with the Makkabees as the most prominent example, acted more and more independently, and increased their positions and territories within the Seleukid empire,⁴ resembling the political environment of the third century.

The most profound change of the second century, however, regarded the Seleukid succession and its implications for the empire. Throughout his long reign, Antiochos III placed a strong emphasis on the Seleukid family, and underlined the connection between his individual success, the Seleukid past, and the Seleukid dynasty. This dynastic policy was shattered when the defeated king was forced to send hostages to Rome as one of the stipulations of the Treaty of Apameia, and these stipulations unintentionally lay the groundwork for the Seleukid succession crisis. With Seleukid princes outside the kingdom, secondary candidates were able to claim the diadem. Although both Seleukos IV and Antiochos IV promoted their children as successors, they were not able to prevent their brother (Antiochos IV) and nephew (Demetrios I) from claiming the diadem after their deaths. The position of the king's brother was precarious, particularly as soon as the king had a son. The secession of Antiochos Hierax in the third century, and Antiochos IV's residence in Athens after his release from Rome, might be interpreted as reactions to reigning brothers who promoted their offspring to the diadem.⁵

The survival of both Antiochos IV and Demetrios I in Rome, and their claims to the diadem, not only eradicated Antiochos III's construction of a strong Seleukid dynasty, but by creating two contending branches of the royal family, it also caused a structural problem for the Seleukid empire: it amplified the possibility (and necessity) of choice. Different branches of a royal family could generate potential tensions between a new ruler and the former king's friends, and these could lead to secession of the Seleukid high power-holders. This is easily visible when focusing on the two groups of usurpers we

⁴ See e.g. Bringmann 1983; Fischer 1980; Ma 2000b; Chrubasik forthcoming b.

⁵ Mittag 2006: 41. Ptolemaios II and Ptolemaios IV had their brothers murdered at their accessions: Paus. 1. 7. 1; Pol. 5. 34. 1–2; see also Gehrke 1982: 271–2. On succession: Chrubasik forthcoming c.

encounter during this period. One group consists of former Seleukid generals who were motivated by the royal succession, as well as perhaps external and internal pressures. The Seleukid generals Timarchos and Tryphon had held prominent positions under the previous ruler, and seceded at the time of the accession of a new king from a different branch of the Seleukid family. The second group were descendants or pretended descendants of the family branch of Antiochos IV. The split in the royal line enabled them to claim to be members of the Seleukid dynasty, and thus attract supporters of previous kings who had been displaced. Therefore, the split in the dynasty paved the way for usurpers, and made the Seleukid empire of the second century no less precarious than it had been in the second half of the third century before Antiochos III's reconquest of Asia Minor.

The possibility of choice, however, also went beyond the high power-holders. While I have indicated the importance of individual agency of local actors, such as power-holders, cities, and other groups within the empire in the first two chapters of this book, the arena of their actions was still limited. Also, the third-century Seleukid kings and usurpers required acceptance. Nevertheless, simply (and perhaps crudely) put, groups within the third-century empire often had only two options to express their agency: they could subject themselves to the individual that controlled the monopoly of power within their region, or they could resist. Therefore, for many agents of the third century their individual politicization was limited. In contrast, most Seleukid usurpers in the second century were able to enlist their troops within the centre of Seleukid power, and in proximity to the Seleukid king, therefore giving usurpation in the second-century Levant a very different quality.

The competition between the Seleukid kings and usurpers gave local groups, such as power-holders (and the elite of Judaea in particular), cities, and troops the possibility of choice, thus transforming the audiences of royal communication into fully active politicized agents. In practice, the Makkabees used the Seleukid kings' conflict with usurpers to establish themselves as a significant power in the region, and their success is demonstrated by the numerous concessions to this group from both kings and usurpers. The presence of more than one contender for the kingship, and the transformation of local groups into politicized agents, therefore enables us to analyse the phenomenon of local politicization more fully. Yet it is precisely the local politicization that—in return—also

offers insight into kings and usurpers' behaviour, and thus into the limits of Seleukid kingship and its defining characteristics.

The royal communication of Seleukid kings and usurpers had to be more persuasive than that of their opponent in order to be accepted as kings. It was argued in the previous chapter that persuasion and the effectiveness of royal communication was already important for kings and usurpers in the third century. Nevertheless, their position of authority in the absence of another king allowed them to a certain extent to rely on their unique position to become and remain the supreme power-holder. This scenario, moreover, makes it heuristically challenging to assess whether it was their persuasiveness or rather their monopoly of power that enabled these kings and usurpers to remain in power within their regions. In the second-century Levant, with more than one power-holder in the same space, this claim was contested and competition amplified; the kings had to be persuasive.

In order to assess the dynamics of power during this period, an introductory 'history' of the Seleukid counter-kings is necessary, followed by an investigation into the royal offers of usurpers, and the responses of some of the politicized bodies within the empire. This chapter will illustrate that kingship in the Seleukid kingdom was neither legitimate nor illegitimate, but rather it depended on acceptance by the political agents within the empire.

3.1 A HISTORY OF THE SELEUKID EMPIRE IN THE MID-SECOND CENTURY, c.162–123

Once Demetrios I was welcomed by the Syrians following his escape from Rome, he did what a king had to do: he ordered his soldiers 'not to show him the faces' of the reigning Antiochos V and the latter's chancellor Lysias, and they were consequently murdered by the troops.⁶ Demetrios I strove not only to avoid possible family members claiming his recently assumed diadem, but with the help of mercenaries and support from the Seleukid troops in Apameia, he rid the Seleukid court of the closest friends and allies of both

⁶ 1 Makk. 7. 3: μή μοι δείξητε τὰ πρόσωπα αὐτῶν. For the welcome in Syria and death of the king: App. Syr. 47 (242); 1 Makk. 7. 4; Jos. Ant. 12. 390. A narrative for this period can be found in: Ehling 2008; Grainger 2010.

Antiochos IV and Antiochos V.⁷ Timarchos, a satrap in Babylon, took matters into his own hands.

3.1a Timarchos

Timarchos and his brother Herakleides were natives of Miletos, and both Diodoros (Diod. Sic. 31. 27a) and Appian (App. Syr. 45 [235]) underline their close relationship with Antiochos IV.⁸ Diodoros (presumably deriving from Polybios) describes Timarchos as the most illustrious satrap of all: the satrap of Media. Appian indicates that Timarchos was appointed satrap by Antiochos IV, and was in Babylon while his brother Herakleides was appointed treasurer (ὁ ἐπὶ τῶν προσόδων).⁹ It is likely that Diodoros' description of Timarchos as the most venerable among the satraps should indicate that he was also the ὁ ἐπὶ τῶν ἄνω σατραπειῶν. The wealth of the satrapy of Media is illustrated in Polybios (5. 43. 8–44. 3; 10. 27. 1–13) and Strabo (11. 13. 6–7), and this wealth, as well Media's geographical location, made the loyalty of the satrapy vital for the Seleukid king. Presumably because of the region's political and economic importance, Antiochos IV appointed Timarchos satrap, a position he maintained during the reign of Antiochos V.¹⁰ When Timarchos' brother Herakleides was removed from office following the accession of Demetrios I (App. Syr. 47 [242]), however, the opportunity to come to terms with the new king in Antiocheia was slim.¹¹ Instead, Timarchos ventured on an

⁷ Apameia: Zon. 9. 25. Herakleides, the former ὁ ἐπὶ τῶν προσόδων of Antiochos IV (App. Syr. 45 [235]) was removed from office, presumably before Timarchos' usurpation (App. Syr. 47 [242]). The new king appointed the 'best and most trusted friend' Nikanor as a commander against the Jews: Jos. Ant. 12. 402. For Bakchides as a friend of both Demetrios and Antiochos IV: Jos. Ant. 12. 393. Note that he is not described as such in 1 Makk. 7. 8; cf. Ehling 2008: 131, following Grainger 1997: 84–5, and Wilcken 1896: 2788.

⁸ For their connection with their native city: *I. Milet* 1–2 and Herrmann 1987: 172–3.

⁹ Diod. Sic. 31. 27a. App. Syr. 45 (235). Brodersen makes Herakleides, perhaps unnecessarily, a διοικητής: BAS, 64–5 (with older literature). Cf. Ma 2002: 135–6. Capdetrey indicates that in this instance Βαβυλώνι did not necessarily refer to the satrapy, but that it rather served as a toponym for the narrative: Capdetrey 2007: 314–16. Similarly: Aperghis 2004: 276–7.

¹⁰ Coloru 2009: 220; *contra* Knepp 1989: 42. The editors translate AD III 161 A₁, A₂ rev. 29: 'TA ^lERĪN^{me} *man-da*' as 'from the Medes(?) . . .' While this could refer to Timarchos and his troops, it also could be a reference to other people from the steppe.

¹¹ See also Houghton 1979: 215.

embassy to Rome (Diod. Sic. 31. 27a). According to Diodoros, Timarchos and Herakleides had been on previous Roman embassies for Antiochos IV, and it was the brothers' good relationship with Roman senators (which was later translated into a historical discourse on bribes) that presumably allowed Timarchos to speak in front of the senate.¹² He slandered Demetrios I and persuaded the senate to acknowledge him as king (Diod. Sic. 31. 27a). Upon his return to his territories, Timarchos began his revolt by raising a considerable army and made an alliance with Artaxias of Armenia (Diod. Sic. 31. 27a).¹³

Timarchos styled himself as 'Great King', and may have taken Babylonia as early as autumn 162 after the last mention of King Antiochos V in the astronomical documents. Demetrios I is first attested in Babylon as king in mid-September 161, and the sacrifices in September/October 161 presumably mark the victory against the usurper.¹⁴ By marching into Babylonia, Timarchos perhaps sought to hinder Demetrios I from having a foothold in the Seleukid east and to cut him off from Babylonian supplies.¹⁵ A tetradrachm attributed to Seleukeia on the Tigris indicates that Timarchos held the Seleukid capital long enough to mint some coinage in the city, and a number of clay seals from Babylon can likely be attributed to his reign.¹⁶ If we follow Appian's note (Syr. 45 [235]), it also is conceivable that he held Babylon from the beginning of his revolt, perhaps initially in the name of Antiochos V. While Diodoros describes how Timarchos

¹² We do not know who these senators were. Ti. Sempronius Gracchus is often described in Polybios as being interested in eastern affairs: e.g. Pol. 30. 27 and 31. 33. 4; Knepp 1989: 40. For the relationship between Eastern Experts and their clients, see Appendix D.

¹³ On the position of the rulers of Armenia within and outside of Seleukid control, see ch. 1. 3.

¹⁴ Antiochos V in Babylon: last attestation in September-October 162: *AD III 161* Left edge 1. A long tablet (*NCBT* 1975 now published in *YOS* 20 no. 47) which A. Goetze thought in 1945 (later revised by Goetze) to be an attestation of Antiochos V in January 161 (Bellinger 1945: 43 n. 2) was misread. I am grateful to B. Foster and E. Payne (both Yale) who provided me with the text. Demetrios I: the first attestation is dated to the 22nd of the sixth month of the Seleukid year 151: *AD VI 71* obv. 29; see Assar 2007: 45; and this leaves Boiy 2004: 165 out of date. The chronology for Demetrios I in Parker and Dubberstein 1956: 23 (referring to Kugler 1922: 334) is superseded by the publication of *AD VI*. Offerings for King Demetrios I in September-October 161: *AD III 160 A* obv. 2. I am grateful to J. Taylor (British Museum) for help with this text; cf. del Monte 1997: 87-8; Ehling 2008: 129 n. 148.

¹⁵ Molon's taking of Babylonia perhaps resulted in financial difficulties for Antiochos III: Pol. 5. 50. 1-2.

¹⁶ SC 1588. Houghton 1979; Invernizzi 2004: 44, Se 44-6.

advanced as far as Zeugma, it is difficult to ascertain how far west Timarchos' arm could reach. Molon's quick campaign, and the little resistance of Seleukid forces in 222 make it possible that in one campaign Timarchos was able to march through large parts of Mesopotamia, and advance to the western borders of Mygdonia.¹⁷ At this time no Seleukid king is mentioned in the Babylonian chronicles for a period of nearly one year, yet there is also no cuneiform evidence of Timarchos' activities in Babylonia.¹⁸

Appian's account of Demetrios I's campaign against Timarchos is strikingly short and straightforward: 'He killed Timarchos who had rebelled and administered the government of Babylonia badly in other respects. For this he was called *sôtēr* and the Babylonians were the first to do so.'¹⁹ The cuneiform material describes similar honours and 'sacrifices for the great gods and the life of King Demetrios' as late as September/October 161 (AD III 160 A obv. 2). After his defeat, Timarchos' tetradrachms were collected and overstruck with issues of a double portrait of Demetrios I and his wife Laodike. The royal title also contained the epithet *sôtēr* (see Fig. 3.4).²⁰ With this, Demetrios I had been able to fight off a pretender, and was accepted as king from Antiocheia as far as Ekbatana. While he had inherited problems with the Makkabees, he was not only able to fortify parts of Judaea and build a tower in Jerusalem, he also secured an alliance with Jonathan the leader of the Makkabees. Seleukid authority was re-established, yet a new usurper was to appear.

3.1b Alexander Balas

Diodoros suggests that Alexander Balas' claim to kingship began in Pergamon: Attalos II was grieving (*βαρυνόμενος*) over the expulsion of Ariarathes V, and sought out Alexander Balas for reasons of his

¹⁷ No coinage can be attributed with certainty to the area west of Seleukeia. Le Rider postulated a mint at Nisibis, however, this is uncertain: Le Rider 1965: 332; with Le Rider 1972: no. 23. The attribution was plausible for Houghton 1979. The editors of SC propose a Median mint as an option: SC 1607.

¹⁸ For the absence of Seleukid names in the Babylonian documents: n. 14.

¹⁹ App. Syr. 47 (242): ... καὶ Τίμαρχον ἐπανιστάμενον ἀνελών, καὶ τὰλλα πονήρως τῆς Βαβυλῶνος ἡγούμενον. ἐφ' ᾧ καὶ Σωτὴρ ἀρξαμένῳ τῶν Βαβυλωνίων, ὠνομάσθη.

²⁰ SC 1683–1690. The coins SC 1686–7; 1689 are overstrikes of Timarchos. The epithet was not limited to Seleukeia: see e.g. in Kilikia (SC 1609), northern Syria (SC 1623), and Antiocheia on the Orontes (SC 1627–32); see Le Rider 1965: 332–4.

own (καὶ τῆς ἰδίας; Diod. Sic. 31. 32a).²¹ Demetrios I's interference in the Kappadokian royal succession, as well Attalid services rendered to the accession of Antiochos IV, could suggest the possibility of strained relations between the Seleukid and Attalid kings in this period.²² Despite this story of the Attalid inception of the usurper, the Attalids are remarkably elusive in the following period.

In the summer of 153, after a stay of uncertain duration with a Kilikian dynast, Herakleides, a former friend of Antiochos IV and brother of the deceased usurper Timarchos, brought the young man and his sister Laodike to Rome to claim his kingship.²³ Alexander begged the Romans to remember their friendship and alliance with Antiochos IV, and asked them for help to regain his kingship (Pol. 33. 18. 7–8). Herakleides meanwhile emphasized Alexander's 'descent by nature' (ἐκγονος κατὰ φύσιν) from Antiochos IV (Pol. 33. 18. 9), and while Polybios indicates Roman discontent in his account, there was no official Roman objection to Alexander Balas' claim to the diadem. It was decreed that he could return home and regain his father's rule (τὴν πατρῶαν ἀρχὴν καταπορεύεσθαι; Pol. 33. 18. 10–13). Polybios described the accession of Alexander Balas as a personal enterprise of Herakleides, who not only immediately hired mercenaries before embarking to Ephesos, but also 'called on distinguished men' (προσεκαλεῖτο τῶν ἐπιφανῶν ἀνδρῶν), presumably to fund the undertaking (Pol. 33. 18. 14).

In the twelve months following his appearance before the Roman senate, Alexander Balas landed with mercenaries on the coast of the Levant and occupied Ptolemais.²⁴ Demetrios I gathered troops for

²¹ Cf. Justin's account on the 'pact of the kings': *Epit.* 35. 1. 6; cf. Walbank *HCP* III: 557. The note in App. *Syr.* 67 (354) indicates Ptolemaic support. Later authors' views on Ptolemaic support are likely to be influenced by the summary in Pol. 3. 5. 3.

²² For the promotion of Antiochos IV by Eumenes II: *OGIS* 248, esp. 10–22. A narrative: Mittag 2006: 42–4 (with references).

²³ He might have stayed in Kilikia for a while. For Diodoros, Alexander was a *μειρακίσκος* when he was taken to Pergamon and when he was sent to Kilikia. While Diodoros' use of age descriptions might not be in accordance with those of Polybios, Diodoros names young men of fighting age as *νεανίσκοι*: e.g. Diod. Sic. 14. 19. 2 and 37. 5a. Only in one other instance (Diod. Sic. 22. 5. 1) does the author label young men as *μειρακίσκοι*. If Diodoros had a clear concept of different ages in his work, it could be argued he differentiated between those who could lead an army (*νεανίσκοι*) and others (younger ones) who were *μειρακίσκοι*. Perhaps Alexander stayed in Kilikia until he was old enough to be brought in front of the senate. Cf. Ehling 2008: 145–7.

²⁴ Jos. *Ant.* 13. 35. Hoover and MacDonald 1999–2000 and Psoma 2013 attribute tetradrachms from Myrina found on the coast of the Levant to this event. See, however, Meadows 2013a: 195.

defence, and proposed an alliance and friendship with the Makkabees (1 Makk. 10. 3–6). Alexander's military strength also relied on a potential alliance with the Makkabaeen leader Jonathan, or at least with the neutrality of the Jewish people in the conflict. Surpassing the offers of Demetrios I, Alexander not only called Jonathan his *φίλος*, his Friend, but also granted Jonathan the high priesthood of Jerusalem (Jos. *Ant.* 13. 45; 1 Makk. 10. 20). Demetrios I attempted to outdo the offers of his opponent, but these offers do not seem to have been persuasive, and the author of 1 Makkabees would later write that the Jews did not believe his promises. It was now that Alexander Balas gathered a large force, and after initial successes by Demetrios I, Alexander's troops gained the upper hand in July 150, and Demetrios I died in battle.²⁵

By September/October of the same year Alexander Balas was widely acknowledged as king in the Seleukid empire.²⁶ The earliest dated coinage from the Seleukid year 162 (151/0 BCE) comes from the coastal mints of Seleukeia in Pieria, Byblos, Berytos, Tyre, and Ptolemais,²⁷ while the earliest dated coinage from Antiocheia on the Orontes comes from the Seleukid year 163.²⁸ A note in Livy's *periochae* surely comes from the context of the taking of Antiocheia by Alexander, illustrating the violent necessities of claimed kingship (which mirrored the accession of Demetrios I): Ammonios, chancellor of Alexander Balas, had '*amici omnes regis*', all the friends of the king, as well as the wife and son of Demetrios I murdered (Liv. *per.* 50).²⁹ After ridding his court of the former king's friends, Alexander made an alliance with Ptolemaios VI Philometor, and married his daughter Kleopatra at a wedding at Ptolemais (Jos. *Ant.*

²⁵ Jos. *Ant.* 13. 59–61; 1 Makk. 10. 48–50; Just. *Epit.* 35. 1. 9–11. Date: AD III 149 A rev. 1–13 describes the events of the third month of the Seleukid year 162, ending on 18/19 July 150 and probably referring to the battle.

²⁶ AD III 149 B obv. 1; rev. 10–13; Upper edge 1 (mentioning of the beginning of the eighth month).

²⁷ SC 1799, 1822.1, 1828. 1830.1, 1831.1, 1835.1, 1842.1. Strikingly, in 162 SE Apameia minted posthumous issues for Antiochos IV, the alleged father of Alexander Balas: SC 1883. While it is not certain if the coins were struck under the authority of Alexander Balas, date and motive could correspond with Alexander's competition with Demetrios I: Mørkholm 1983. They could, however, also be minted by a mint that did not know which king to follow.

²⁸ Houghton and Hoover forthcoming believe to have found die linkages that indicate earlier minting; see the lemma in SC 1780–97.

²⁹ On this passage: Chrubasik forthcoming c. On the son, see n. 33.

13. 80–2). In the context of the wedding Alexander Balas tried to strengthen the stability of his kingdom further by bestowing additional honours on the Jewish high priest Jonathan, making him a ‘first friend’, *stratēgos* and *meridarch* (1 Makk. 10. 62 and 65; Jos. *Ant.* 13. 83–5). The narrative of 1 Makk 10. 61 suggests that the king wished to strike an alliance with the Makkabees, while requests from other groups to establish a relationship with the new king (surely including the so-called ‘Hellenizers’) were ignored.³⁰ Beyond alliances, there is evidence that Alexander’s administration followed Seleukid models: high officials included Ammonios, ὁ προεστηκὼς τῆς βασιλείας, likely the chancellor (Diod. Sic. 33. 5. 1), two commanders of Antiocheia (Diod. Sic. 33. 3), a *nauarchos* (*I. Milet* 422), and a *stratēgos* of Babylonia ‘who is above the four generals’ (*AD* III 149 B rev. 11). While Antiocheia on the Orontes seems to have been the principal mint, royal coinage was also issued in Rough Kilikia (with a local reverse), Mesopotamia, and possibly Ekbatana in the East (all with the reverse of Apollo on the Omphalos).³¹ Alexander also established royal mints in Koilē-Syria and Phoenicia.

Stability, however, did not last long. Following, and perhaps in direct consequence of, the loss of Seleukid Media to the Parthians,³² Demetrios II, the son of the late Demetrios I, sailed from Crete and landed in Kilikia in spring 147.³³ After his arrival, Demetrios II established a certain Apollonios as *stratēgos* of Koilē Syria, who may

³⁰ On use and abuse of the term ‘Hellenizers’: Gruen 1998: 2–4. Honigman 2014: 310–15 makes important qualifications on how Judaeen politics in this period should be viewed. Nevertheless, apparently for some groups a display of elements of the *polis* was attractive: Honigman 2014: 365–77; see also Chrubasik forthcoming a.

³¹ Seleukeia/Kalykadnos: SC 1776 with Houghton 1989: 84–5. Seleukeia/Tigris: SC 1858–63 (with lemma) with Le Rider 1965: 147–50. Persian Gulf: Mørkholm 1970 attributed the issue to Antiocheia/Persian Gulf; SC 1866. Susa: SC 1867–8 (with lemma). Ekbatana: SC 1869–78 with Le Rider 1965: 338–40.

³² Rider 1965: 339–40; see also SC 1859; cf. Just. *Epit.* 41. 6. 6. A *terminus post quem* of June 148: Robert, *OMS* VI: 615. The text was republished in *I.d'Iran et d'Asie centrale* 70.

³³ Demetrios II was likely older than Antiochos VII and must have been at least sixteen years old at this time; *contra* Ehling 2001: 374–6. If we can place any emphasis on Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F32. 19 who writes that Antiochos VII was 35 years old when he died, this would suggest his birth was in 164. Bevan 1902: II App. P. 301–2, suggests that Demetrios II referred to the murdered brother Antigonos on his coinage. If Ehling’s interpretation of Philadelphos as an epithet for second brothers is correct, Antigonos would have been the older brother: Ehling 2001: 374–6.

have seceded from Alexander Balas (1 Makk. 10. 69–89; Jos. *Ant.* 13. 88–102). Demetrios II attacked the Jewish allies of Alexander, perhaps aware that the alliance between Alexander and the Makkabees was one of the key factors that had led to his father's defeat. Yet 1 Makkabees exults in the successes of Jonathan, and depicts the taking of Joppa, the defeat of Apollonios, and the burning of Ashdod. Alexander responded with further honours for his Jewish allies, acknowledging Jewish power over the city of Ekron, and its territory twenty kilometres east of Ashdod (1 Makk. 10. 74–89; Jos. *Ant.* 13. 91–102).³⁴

The rest of 147 remains obscure. The gathering of troops from the Herakleopolitean nome in Middle Egypt mentioned in a papyrus dated to 29 May 146, could indicate, however, the involvement of a new actor on the stage of the Levant. Josephus reports that Ptolemaios VI helped Alexander in his fight against Demetrios II, and only a secret plot made him change his allegiance (Jos. *Ant.* 13. 103–7). His narrative is dramatic, fitting the genre of Hellenistic historiography, and it is interesting that Josephus strays from his usual close interpretation of 1 Makk., whose author explains this episode with Ptolemaios VI's cunning to take Alexander's kingdom (1 Makk. 11. 1–8). The following scenario is plausible: Ptolemaios VI hastened to Phoenicia to 'help' his ally and son-in-law (an action reminiscent of Ptolemaios III's help for his sister on the eve of the Third Syrian War). The stationing of troops, the taking of the coast up to Seleukeia Pieria, and the tentative possibility of the minting of coinage, however, indicated what this help entailed: the Ptolemaic takeover of the Levantine coast.³⁵ The 'plot of Ammonios' on Ptolemaios VI's life (Jos. *Ant.* 13. 106–7)—regardless of whether this was a real occurrence or a discursive insertion into Josephus' narrative—marked the breakdown of communication between Alexander and his allied father-in-law. In order to achieve his aims, Ptolemaios VI proposed an alliance with Demetrios II (who up to this point does not seem to have engaged Alexander directly). The promise of Ptolemaios' daughter—at this point presumably still with Alexander and

³⁴ Ma 2000b: 102–4.

³⁵ Billeted troops: 1 Makk. 11. 3. Seleukeia/Pieria: 1 Makk. 11. 8. Coins: Svoronos 1486, with the discussion in Appendix C. See also Lorber 2007. Price: according to Diod. Sic. 32. 9c, Ptolemaios VI demanded Koilē-Syria when forming an alliance with Demetrios II in the Sixth Syrian War.

most likely in Antiocheia—to Demetrios II is used in both narratives as the signifier of the new alliance.³⁶

Antiocheia was not taken by force. The city's commanders Hierax and Diodotos, perhaps aware of large Ptolemaic contingents, opened the gates. At this moment Ptolemaios most likely recovered his daughter. Additionally, Diodotos and Hierax bound the diadem around Ptolemaios VI's head and declared him king. While the author of 1 Makkabees describes a king with the diadems of Egypt and of Asia,³⁷ Josephus adds that Ptolemaios VI was concerned about Roman objections to this, and the Ptolemaic king announced that instead he would be 'a counsellor of good' (διδάσκαλος τε ἀγαθῶν) and a 'guide' (ἡγεμόν) to Demetrios II if the people of Antiocheia accepted the latter as king (Jos. *Ant.* 13. 115), and it may have been now that Demetrios II married Kleopatra. There is, however, little evidence that Demetrios was king before the death of Ptolemaios VI, and this narrative seems to have been influenced by the latter's death and the subsequent kingship of Demetrios II (perhaps also foreshadowing his future relationship with Antiocheia). The lack of dated coinage for Demetrios II before the death of Ptolemaios VI, and the inclusion of Ptolemaios VI in the Seleukid royal cult (albeit by a private individual), might give some indication of Demetrios II's position in this arrangement and the extent of the Ptolemaic occupation.³⁸

From Kilikia Alexander Balas approached quickly, perhaps via Gindaros, with ample supplies (Jos. *Ant.* 13. 116; 1 Makk. 11. 15). His son was placed in the care of a local Arabian dynast with the double name of Diokles/Zabdiel, and he met the forces of Ptolemaios VI and Demetrios II on the banks of the Oinoparas River.³⁹ The narratives offer little details: Alexander Balas was defeated, and he fled towards the Arabian tribes. Trying to find refuge with the aforementioned Zabdiel, he was either murdered by the dynast or by two of the Alexander Balas' ἡγεμόνες, military commanders, who betrayed their king in order to establish good relations with the new

³⁶ 1 Makk. 11. 9–10. According Jos. *Ant.* 13. 110, Ptolemaios took his daughter from Alexander Balas before he promised her to Demetrios.

³⁷ 1 Makk. 11. 13; also Jos. *Ant.* 13. 113–15. For the city commanders: Diod. Sic. 32. 9c.

³⁸ For the marriage: Jos. *Ant.* 13. 116; 1 Makk. 11. 12. Royal cult: OGIS 246 (Teos) and SEG 13. 585 (Paphos). Also, Strab. 16. 2. 8 describes Ptolemaios VI as the driving force who defeated Alexander Balas.

³⁹ Son: Diod. Sic. 32. 9d, 10. 1; cf. Just. *Epit.* 35. 2. 1 for Demetrios I's sons who had been sent away. Battle: Strab. 16. 2. 8.

king, Demetrios II.⁴⁰ While Ptolemaios VI—according to Josephus’ dramatic scenario—still had a chance to look on the severed head of the dead king, he in return passed away soon afterwards.⁴¹ Demetrios II, who was king by late 145,⁴² eradicated the encroachments of his late father-in-law (Jos. *Ant.* 13. 120),⁴³ pushed the Ptolemaic troops out of his territories, and, according to the Babylonian chronicles, he ventured as far as the cities of Egypt (AD III 144 obv. 35).

3.1c Antiochos VI and Tryphon

Demetrios II not only expelled Ptolemaic forces from the region under his control, but also, according to Diodoros (33. 4. 2), rid himself of the close associates of Alexander Balas. One of them seems to have been Tryphon, who now must have doubted his future under the new king, and who found refuge with an Arabian dynast (1 Makk. 11. 39–40). Strabo indicates that Tryphon, born Diodotos near a fortress of Apameia, was a *philos* of Alexander Balas.⁴⁴ It is plausible (though not entirely certain) that it was the same Diodotos who, as a seceding commander of Alexander Balas, had given over the city of Antiocheia to Ptolemaios VI, described above (Diod. Sic. 32. 9c).

Demetrios II, after his war against Egypt and in an alliance with the Makkabees (1 Makk. 11. 22–37; Jos. *Ant.* 13. 123–8), reduced the size of the standing army (Jos. *Ant.* 13. 129). This measure was presumably not unusual at the end of a war, but nevertheless precarious when pretenders to the diadem could exploit the tensions between a king and his troops.⁴⁵ Diodoros writes that the king also punished the city of Antiocheia, probably not only for supporting Alexander Balas and

⁴⁰ Murder by Zabdiel: 1 Makk. 11. 17; Jos. *Ant.* 13. 118. Murder by his officers: Diod. Sic. 32. 9d, 10. 1. Conclusions cannot be drawn, yet if Diokles/Zabdiel murdered Alexander Balas, it is instructive that he kept the prince alive.

⁴¹ Jos. *Ant.* 13. 118. Also 1 Makk. 11. 17–18.

⁴² AD III 144 obv. 14 mentions Demetrios II without a title on 7/8 September 145, perhaps reflecting the uncertainty of his accession. In mid-October, he is king: AD III 144 obv. 35.

⁴³ Note that 1 Makk. 11. 18 places agency in the hands of the local communities.

⁴⁴ Strab. 16. 2. 10; see also 1 Makk. 11. 39.

⁴⁵ Josephus added a note on the reduction of the regular troops’ pay (not in 1 Makk. 11. 38), perhaps to add to the dramatic effect of his passage. The stability in the weight standards from Antiocheia does not indicate a debasement in the coinage that could suggest economic strains: SC ii.2 Appendix 1. Different: Mittag 2008: 51–2; Ehling 2008: 165; see also ch. 3.3d.

Ptolemaios VI, but also for defecting from Demetrios I. The punishment seems to have caused riots (Diod. Sic. 33. 4. 2–3). The king barricaded himself in the palace to which the people laid siege, and 1 Makkabees suggests that it was only with the help of Judaeans troops, who set fire to the city, that Demetrios II was able to gain control of the situation (1 Makk. 11. 45–50; Jos. *Ant.* 13.137–41).

It was apparently in this period that Diodotos allied himself with the keeper of Alexander Balas' son, and that he styled the boy as Antiochos VI.⁴⁶ A number of troops seem to have defected from Demetrios II and joined Tryphon and the new king, whether because of lack of pay under Demetrios II (Jos. *Ant.* 13. 144), out of hatred (Diod. Sic. 33. 4a), or for other reasons. The men of Larissa near Apameia are mentioned as early supporters of the usurper, and Tryphon seems to have gathered at Chalkis ad Belum, southwest of Beroia (Diod. Sic. 33. 4a). After a successful battle against Demetrios II, Tryphon took 'the elephants' and Antiocheia (1 Makk. 11. 55–6; Jos. *Ant.* 13. 144).⁴⁷ The elephants are clearly a reference to Apameia, home of the royal stud and the elephants—a city securely situated with a fortified hill and fertile marshes, that was also described as Tryphon's base (Strab. 16. 2. 10) and the place where coinage was issued in the name of Antiochos VI from early 144 onwards.⁴⁸

Antiocheia began minting in the name of Antiochos VI in late 144 or early 143, and Demetrios II fled to Seleukeia (Liv. *per.* 52), presumably Seleukeia in Pieria.⁴⁹ Already in July/August 144, Tryphon

⁴⁶ Diod. Sic. 33. 4a; 1 Makk. 11. 39–40; Jos. *Ant.* 13. 131 and 144.

⁴⁷ The editors of SC argue in the lemma for SC 2016–17 that the following series could come from Chalkis because of its less polished style; this is, however, not conclusive.

⁴⁸ For the coinage: SC 2008–9. Houghton 1992b: 123–4 placed the mint at Apameia because of the use of the *thyrsos* as a mintmark. The mint ceased to operate later in 144, indicating its move to Antiocheia. The obverse depicts a young portrait, the reverse the *Dioskuroi*, and the typical Apollo. A third possible image (SC 2012) shows a panther, presumably a reference to Dionysos; Houghton 1992b: 134–5 (followed by SC) argues that the mint officials from Antioch seceded from Demetrios II and joined Tryphon's cause. After the takeover of Antiocheia, they returned with Antiochos VI. For the *Dioskuroi*: see n. 106. For coinage in the name of Antiochos IV: Mørkholm 1983: 61.

⁴⁹ For the date of the battle: Houghton 1992b: 134; Houghton and Hoover forthcoming. On Seleukeia/Pieria see Strab. 16. 2. 8; cf. Jos. *Ant.* 13. 221–2. The attribution of coins from Demetrios II to Seleukeia (dated to 142/1) is shaky: SC 1929–30. Demetrios II's withdrawal to Kilikia by Jos. *Ant.* 13. 145—if connected—might suggest that it was Seleukeia on the Kalykadnos. This could, however, also refer to later activities.

or one of his commanders was on a campaign in Babylonia, but Antiochos VI was not accepted as king, and Seleukeia on the Tigris continued to strike coinage in the name of Demetrios II until Babylonia was taken by the Parthians in June or July 141.⁵⁰ It was also during this period that the Seleukids lost Susa and the Persian Gulf.⁵¹ Back in the western parts of the empire, other mints also continued to mint for Demetrios II, and while, for example, Tarsos and Mallos seem to have reverted to coinage in the name of Antiochos VI, some new Kilikian mints opened in the name of Demetrios II.⁵²

The minting patterns of the Levantine cities in particular are indicative of the power dynamics of the period. Ptolemais had apparently never minted for Demetrios II, and began striking coins in the name of Antiochos VI in 144/3. Byblos and Askalon issued their first Seleukid silver coinage in 142/1, also in the name of Antiochos VI, while other cities continued to mint for Demetrios II. Sidon and Tyre minted in the name of Demetrios II until 140/39 and 141/0, and later issued coins in the name of Antiochos VII.⁵³ As the change of coin types and portraits in a royal mint was a clear political change that required communication and exchange with the new centre, it is clear that cities that continued to strike for Demetrios II were not part of Antiochos VI's empire. Whether these mints struck coinage in the name of Demetrios II because they remained under his authority, however, or whether royal control was waning and mints issued coins in the king's name but under their own auspices, makes a big difference for the interpretation of the political landscape of the period. Given the limited evidence, however, this cannot always be ascertained. Josephus writes that Gaza had defected from Demetrios II but did not want to go over to Antiochos VII (Jos. *Ant.* 13. 150). Perhaps

⁵⁰ Campaigns and non-acceptance: AD III 143 A flake 20–1. For van der Spek 1997–8: 172, AD III 140 C rev. 36–7, perhaps unnecessarily, indicates that Antiochos VI must still have been alive in January 140. Parthian takeover: AD III 140 A obv. 1; van der Spek 1997–8: 171. For Seleukeia/Tigris: SC 1983–91. Presence of Mithridates: AD 140 A rev. 7, incorporating the previous reference to *LBAT* 418 (Oelsner 1975: 27–9).

⁵¹ On the Persian Gulf and Susa: SC 1993–5a. For Kammasškiri and Elam: Le Rider 1978; Potts 2002; see also van't Haaff 2007.

⁵² Tarsos (SC 1996–7). Mallos (SC 1998). The new mints of Demetrios II: Mopsos (SC 1898) as well as Uncertain Mints 92 and 93 (SC 1899–1903).

⁵³ Antiochos VI: Byblos: SC 2020. Askalon: SC 2026–7. Ptolemais: SC 2023–5. Demetrios II: Berytos: SC 1952 and 2100 (under Antiochos VII) Sidon: SC 1953–7 and 2101–6 (under Antiochos VII) Tyre: SC 1958–71 and 2107–15 (under Antiochos VII).

in the aftermath of the death of Jonathan, the same city issued bronze coinage for the local market in the name of Demetrios II.⁵⁴ In this particular instance, I would be hesitant to interpret these coins as the return of Demetrios II's control.

The Hasmonean sources suggest a prominent role for Jonathan, the high priest of Jerusalem, in the conflict between Antiochos VI, Tryphon, and Demetrios II. Judaeans involvement was by now conventional. Soon after his accession, Antiochos VI and Tryphon sent letters to Jonathan, granting honours and gifts, and appointing the latter's brother Simon as *stratēgos* (1 Makk. 11. 57–9), to which Jonathan replied, professing his gratitude (Jos. *Ant.* 13. 145–7). Judaeans power in this period is illustrated by the radius of their actions, indicating military activities not only beyond the Sea of Galilee but as far north as Damascus (1 Makk. 12. 24–32; Jos. *Ant.* 13. 174–9). The Eleutheros River south of Arados was perceived as a line of safety for Seleukid troops (Jos. *Ant.* 13. 179), and Simon's campaigns and sieges suggest Jewish control south of Galilee.⁵⁵ Also, Askalon, Joppa, and Jerusalem seem to have been fortified (1 Makk. 12. 33–8; Jos. *Ant.* 13. 180–3). All this forms a picture of Judaeans resources and manpower as well as its fragility (reminiscent of third-century Asia Minor). Seleukid troops could still march into Judaea, and Jonathan was captured under Tryphon's orders (1 Makk. 12. 42–52; Jos. *Ant.* 13. 188–93).⁵⁶ Tryphon might have hoped to reaffirm control over the Makkabees, but Simon was chosen as the new Jewish leader, and the situation escalated. While Simon paid ransom, Jonathan was not set free, and when Tryphon abandoned his attack on Jerusalem (due to heavy snow, according to Josephus), Jonathan was executed and Tryphon returned north.⁵⁷

At this point, Antiochos VI died—the last coinage in his name is dated to 142/1 (the Seleukid year 171).⁵⁸ Regardless of whether the

⁵⁴ SC 1974–6; Hoover 2007: 66–8. See ch. 3.3b.

⁵⁵ See also the preliminary report on an administrative building near Kedesh, which was destroyed during this period: Herbert and Berlin 2003; Ariel and Naveh 2003. On Arados as a frontier zone: Duyrat 2005: esp. 223–45. For Simon's campaigns: 1 Makk. 11. 65–6; Jos. *Ant.* 13. 156–7 (against Beth-Sur); 1 Makk. 12. 33–4; Jos. *Ant.* 13. 180 (for the occupation of Joppa).

⁵⁶ Fischer 1972: 202–3, n. 13; cf. Ehling 2008: 174–5.

⁵⁷ Confrontation: 1 Makk. 13. 12–24; Jos. *Ant.* 13. 203–9.

⁵⁸ SC 2020 (Byblos); SC 2022. 3 (Ptolemais); SC 2026 (Askalon).

boy was murdered or died during surgery,⁵⁹ his former guardian had to act quickly: he made himself king and his troops followed him.⁶⁰ While Diodotos might have held the name of Tryphon before, it now became his royal name.⁶¹ For Josephus, Tryphon's reign did not last long; his troops defected and joined Antiochos VII as soon as they could (Jos. *Ant.* 13. 223). Yet both the regnal years on the coinage and a sling bullet demonstrate a reign that lasted until 138/7, his fifth year.⁶² Also, the coinage of Antiocheia on the Orontes suggests, unsurprisingly, continuity from Antiochos VI to Tryphon.⁶³ Like Timarchos and many other rulers, Tryphon sought to be recognized as king by the senate of Rome, and sent a golden Nikē to the Roman people (Diod. Sic. 33. 28a). According to Diodoros' narrative, the senate accepted the gift, but in the name of the murdered Antiochos VI, suggesting the senate's limited interest in this king in the Levant. While it might have been Tryphon who had crowned Ptolemaios VI, there is no evidence of Tryphon's relationship with other kings.⁶⁴

In the southern Levant, Simon tried to establish as much autonomy for his people as possible. A gift of a golden crown to the king is mentioned in a letter from Demetrios II to Simon, the Elders, and the people of Judaea (1 Makk. 13. 35–40). Demetrios II granted them fortresses in Judaea, made tax exemptions, and implicitly gave up on the garrison in the fortress of Jerusalem (1 Makk. 13. 49). Makkabean historiography celebrates the early days of June 142 as the

⁵⁹ Murder of Antiochos VI: 1 Makk. 13. 31; Diod. Sic. 33. 28; App. Syr. 68 (357); Just. *Epit.* 36. 1. 7; Oros. 5. 4. 18. Tryphon's indication of surgery: Jos. *Ant.* 13. 218; Liv. *per.* 55. Note Ehling 2008: 179.

⁶⁰ 1 Makk. 13. 32; Jos. *Ant.* 13. 187. Troops: Jos. *Ant.* 13. 219–20.

⁶¹ The assumption that the control mark TPY under Antiochos VI stands for Tryphon, and that this is evidence for an earlier adoption of the name is a circular argument. Also, the literary evidence might insert the later name into the accounts of his early life: Diod. Sic. 33. 4a and 33. 28; Strab. 14. 5. 2 and 16. 2. 10; Jos. *Ant.* 13. 131. Houghton 1992b: 121. For the initial discussion: *BMC Seleucids* xxxiii as well as Babelon 1890: cxxxvii.

⁶² For the last issues of Tryphon: SC 2043 (Byblos); SC 2046 (Ptolemais); SC 2048. 3 (Askalon). Sling bullet: Gera 1985: 163. The reading of Fischer 1992 is not followed here.

⁶³ See the corresponding mintmarks from Antiochos VI (SC 2000–3) to Tryphon (SC 2029–33); *contra* van der Spek 1997–8: 172.

⁶⁴ Diodotos/Tryphon and Egypt: Ehling 2003: 323; Ehling 2008: 180 n. 574. The evocation of *tryphē* in name and image should not necessarily be connected to Ptolemaic Egypt. A search in the *LGP*N demonstrates the prominence of the name in other parts of the Hellenistic world during this period.

independence of the Jewish people (1 Makk. 13. 41). Not unlike Seleukos II in his attempts to limit his brother's control,⁶⁵ Demetrios II seems to have granted liberties in order to obstruct or at least complicate alliances for his opponent. While Demetrios II granted further liberties to Judaea, he also prepared an eastern campaign, and perhaps as late as 139/8 he ventured east to retake Babylonia.⁶⁶ The absence of Demetrios II might have been advantageous to Tryphon's control of the Levant, even more so after Demetrios was captured by the Parthians in July/August 138,⁶⁷ when, for a while, Tryphon was the only king in the Seleukid empire.

The difficult landing faced by Antiochos VII (Jos. *Ant.* 13. 222) indicates that Tryphon, despite his fractured relationship with the people of Judaea, controlled the coast of the Levant and perhaps Kilikia.⁶⁸ Byblos, Ptolemais, and Askalon were striking coinage in the fourth year of Tryphon's reign in 139/8; further north, Berytos was apparently razed.⁶⁹ The cities of Sidon and Tyre, however, never ceased to mint coinage for Demetrios II, and already in the Seleukid year 174 (139/8 BCE) Tyre started to mint coinage in the name of Antiochos VII.⁷⁰ Perhaps Josephus' account of the wanderings of Antiochos VII is exaggerated, and the new king approached the northern cities in order to be closer to the northern tetrapolis; the defences of Seleukeia in Pieria may have been attractive to him.⁷¹ It is, however, also possible that the minting of coinage in the name of Demetrios II in Sidon and Tyre does not necessarily indicate continued control of the cities by that king. Tyre had achieved its new status as sacred and inviolable, which the city was eager to display on its coinage from 142/1 onwards.⁷² If this hypothetical interpretation

⁶⁵ See ch. 2.1b.

⁶⁶ If SC 1992 should be attributed to a retaking of Seleukeia, the date supplied by Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F32. 16 is more probable than the year 141/0 suggested by 1 Makk. 14. 1–3. See also van der Spek 1997–8: 172; Will 1982: 407–10.

⁶⁷ AD III 137 A rev. 8–11; note also 1 Makk. 14. 1–3; Jos. *Ant.* 13. 186.

⁶⁸ For Tryphon and the pirates (Strab. 14. 5. 2), see e.g. Maróti 1962; Ehling 2008: 169.

⁶⁹ Byblos: SC 2043. Ptolemais: SC 2046. Askalon: SC 2048. 3. Berytos: Strab. 16. 2. 19; the city later minted bronze coinage again in the name of Antiochos VII.

⁷⁰ Tyre: SC 2108. 1; 2109. 1; 2110. 1; 2115. 1. Antiocheia and Seleukeia in Pieria also started minting for Antiochos VII in 139/8: SC 2063; 2064. 1–5; 2066. 1; 2067. 1–2; 2068. 1–2.

⁷¹ On the defences of Seleukeia: cf. Pol. 5. 58. 10; cf. Rey-Coquais 1978.

⁷² SC 1960–1; see Seyrig 1950: 19–21; Iossif forthcoming.

is acceptable, it could provide an explanation as to why these cities were not interested in admitting Antiochos VII; needless to say, this remains speculative.⁷³

Antiochos VII landed, and Tryphon could not hinder the new king from negotiations with the people of Judaea. Antiochos VII not only confirmed all prior grants and gifts, but also attempted to outdo his predecessors by giving further privileges, such as the right of coinage, exemption from taxation, the confirmation of their fortresses, and further promises once he was sole ruler.⁷⁴ Tryphon met Antiochos VII in battle, and while the narrative suggests that a large number of troops defected to the new king (Jos. *Ant.* 13. 223) from Tryphon's ranks (1 Makk. 15. 10), this view might be exaggerated. Yet in the year of Antiochos VII's landing Antiocheia on the Orontes began to mint in the name of the new king, and by the beginning of the Seleukid year 175 (138/7 BCE) more and more royal mints started to issue coinage for Antiochos VII, including Damascus and presumably Tarsos.⁷⁵ Tryphon's troops either were expelled from Antiocheia or changed sides. Tryphon himself retreated south along the Levantine coast, and his last dated coinage comes from the year 139/8.⁷⁶ We hear of a defeat, and Tryphon fled from Syria to Phoenicia and eventually to Dor, where in his fifth year he was besieged by Antiochos VII.⁷⁷ Tryphon might have fled to Orthosia (1 Makk. 15. 37) and afterwards to Apameia, the initial base of his kingship, where Josephus describes a further siege, the usurper's capture, and execution (Jos. *Ant.* 13. 224). Strabo wrote that Tryphon's reign ended with suicide.⁷⁸ This should have occurred in late 138 or perhaps in early 137. No account mentions the defection of troops in these final days of Tryphon's reign.

⁷³ According to Just. *Epit.* 39. 1. 8 it was the *praefectus* of Tyre who murdered Demetrios II; see ch. 3.3c.

⁷⁴ 1 Makk. 15. 5–9. For a possible realigning regarding 1 Makk. 15. 6–7, see Wirgin 1972: 105–6. On (the lack of) coinage: Schürer 1973: 190–1; Ehling 2008: 186–9. For the time of writing: Rhodes or abroad: 1 Makk. 15. 1. App. *Syr.* 68 (358); Seleukeia: Jos. *Ant.* 13. 223.

⁷⁵ Probably Tarsos: SC 2053. Damascus: SC 2096. 1. Sidon: SC 2102. 1

⁷⁶ Ptolemais: SC 2046. Askalon: SC 2048. 3

⁷⁷ For a possible retreat to Ptolemais and the appearance of the mintmark of Antiocheia, see the lemma of SC 2045–6. Defeat and siege: 1 Makk. 15. 10–14; 25. Defensive character: Jos. *Ant.* 13. 223. On the fifth year: Gera 1985: 163.

⁷⁸ Apameia as a fortress: Strab. 16. 2. 10. Execution: see also App. *Syr.* 68 (358). Suicide: Strab. 14. 5. 2; Synk. 351. 18–19 (553).

3.1d Alexander Zabinas

And then there is silence. Following the death of Tryphon, no rival to Antiochos VII is recorded. It was only after the king's death and Demetrios II's return that a further claimant to the diadem emerged. His coinage suggests a reign from 129/8 to c.123; his title was βασιλεὺς Ἀλέξανδρος.⁷⁹ His arrival in the Seleukid empire was closely related to Demetrios II's engagement in Ptolemaic affairs. Civil war had struck the Ptolemaic empire of the late 130s; Kleopatra II and her brother Ptolemaios VIII Euergetes II dissolved their union, and the queen appears to have established herself in Alexandria, to where her brother returned before 28 May 130.⁸⁰ Justin describes a campaign of Demetrios II against Egypt (*Epit.* 39. 1. 2). Whether indeed Demetrios II was invited by Kleopatra II, as suggested by Justin (presumably relying on Seleukid court historiography), is impossible to ascertain, but he was pushed back by Ptolemaios VIII at Pelusium. This failed campaign into Egypt led to dissatisfaction among the troops, and he tried to reaffirm his position (like Antiochos IV before him) by marching against Hyrkanos (Jos. *Ant.* 13. 267). Perhaps due to a revolt (Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F 32. 21), this did not occur. This scenario is surely the origin of Josephus' narrative that Demetrios II was universally hated by Syrians and troops alike, πονηρὸς γὰρ ἦν 'for he was a scoundrel' (*Ant.* 13. 267).

It was also in this context that—according to Justin—Ptolemaios VIII Euergetes II chose the son of a merchant, gave him the name Alexander, and sent him into the Seleukid empire; a measure eagerly awaited by the Syrians (*Epit.* 39. 1. 4–5). The young man was presumably a pretended son of Alexander Balas (Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F 32. 21).⁸¹ Despite the mention of Alexander being a son of a merchant, the story of his 'creation' is a story not so much about his background, but rather about the qualities of Demetrios II's kingship. 'The Syrians would not reject any king whatsoever',⁸² and

⁷⁹ Seleukid year 184 (129/8 BCE) from Antiocheia: SC 2229. 1–3; 2230. 1. 189 SE (124/3) from Askalon and Uncertain Mint 114: SC 2254; 2256. 3; 2257. 2.

⁸⁰ For a narrative: Hölbl 2001: 197–200; Huß 2001: 608–14; Nadig 2007: 208–14. For the date: *P.Eheverträge* no. 37. 2 (= *P.Leid.Dem.* 373A).

⁸¹ Proposed by: Mørkholm 1983: 62; cf. Ehling 2008: 209. It is unlikely that Alexander Zabinas could have been a biological son of Alexander Balas, as the boy must have been sent to Egypt before the death of Ptolemaios VI.

⁸² Just. *Epit.* 39. 1. 5: ... *Nec Syris quemlibet regem aspernantibus.*

this allows the author to transpose the Syrians' despair into a discourse against their king: even a merchant's son with a fabricated background is welcome, demonstrating the 'bad nature' of Demetrios II. The discontent of the Syrians is also expressed in Josephus' account.⁸³

While we know the years of Alexander's reign, we do not know much about it. Nevertheless, a tentative picture will be useful. Antiocheia must have been relatively unstable. The young Antiochos Epiphanes (a supposed son of Antiochos VII) reigned in the city for a brief period of time, perhaps after the city had revolted against Demetrios II.⁸⁴ Regardless, Antiocheia must have quickly changed sides again, and in 129/8 the city already minted dated coinage in the name of Alexander Zabinas.⁸⁵ Alexander Zabinas was accepted by the people of Antiocheia, and his care for the dead body of Antiochos VII in particular led to his support (Just. *Epit.* 39. 1. 6).⁸⁶ His campaigns against Demetrios II, perhaps supported by the Ptolemaic king, also were successful, and Porphyrios writes that it was this support that gave him the nickname Zabinas, 'the bought one'.⁸⁷ While Kilikia seems to have continued to mint for Demetrios II, cities in northern Syria cannot be securely attested. Perhaps Alexander Zabinas landed in northern Syria and marched south to meet his opponent. Damascus minted in the name of Demetrios II for a while, as did Ptolemais and Askalon. The latter two and Sidon ceased to mint in the name of Demetrios II in the Seleukid year 186 (127/6), and while Askalon minted for Alexander Zabinas in the following year, Ptolemais issued one series in the name of βασιλίσσα Κλεοπάτρα.⁸⁸ The break in the

⁸³ Jos. *Ant.* 13. 267. Diod. Sic. in 34/5. 22 and 28 does not question the position of Alexander.

⁸⁴ Just. *Epit.* 39. 1. 3. The reference to their leader (*primi duce*) Tryphon should rather be placed in the 140s (as suggested by Hoffmann 1939b: 722–3). Possibly only the leader's name was confused, and not the revolt of 129. For Antiochos Epiphanēs: the editors of SC have convincingly argued for another King Antiochos, SC 2208–9 (with lemma). Because of control linkage, Ehling 1996's reconstruction of the king in 131 is not convincing. Houghton and Le Rider 1988: 401–11 have attributed the coinage to a first reign of Antiochos VIII.

⁸⁵ SC 2229; 2230.1.

⁸⁶ Justin's interpretation that Alexander was a pretended son of (presumably) Antiochos VII could derive from this scene.

⁸⁷ Support: Jos. *Ant.* 13. 268; Just. *Epit.* 39. 1. 5. Nickname: from Aramaic ܒܝܬ 'buy, gain'; Ezra 10. 43; Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F32. 21; Diod. Sic. 34/5. 22.

⁸⁸ Demetrios II: Sidon (SC 2189. 7–8); Ptolemais (SC 2204. 2; 2205. 2; 2206); Askalon (SC 2206). Alexander Zabinas: Askalon (SC 2253; 2255–56. 1). Kleopatra Thea: Ptolemais (SC 2258). For a narrative, see Ehling 2008: 210–12.

coinage from Sidon, Ptolemais, and Askalon might suggest the collapse of Demetrios II's control, which can be corroborated with an issue of Alexander's coinage from Ptolemais. It is reasonable to suggest that the coinage of Kleopatra Thea Eueteria was an intermediary issue in opposition to Alexander Zabinas. It was in early 125, presumably near Damascus (Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F32. 21), that Demetrios II was defeated in battle.⁸⁹ The defeated king fled to Ptolemais, where his wife Kleopatra did not receive him, and from there to Tyre, where he was killed (Jos. *Ant.* 13. 268), according to Justin on the orders of the *praefectus* (*Epit.* 39. 1. 7–8).⁹⁰

Alexander Zabinas also managed to bring parts of Kilikia under his control, and for two years he was the sole king in the Seleukid empire.⁹¹ He may have celebrated his victory over Demetrios II with a gold stater as well as with the epithets *Theos* and *Nikēphoros*.⁹² Alexander Zabinas also established a friendship with the Jewish high priest Hyrkanos (Jos. *Ant.* 13. 269). Yet he was not unchallenged. It is difficult to ascertain the importance of the secession (and later resubmission) of three 'noteworthy commanders' (ἀξιόλογοι ἡγεμόνες) who took Laodikeia (Diod. Sic. 34/5. 22). The position of Ptolemais, however, is more striking. Here, Kleopatra Thea promoted her son, the future Antiochos VIII, as her co-regent.⁹³ Moreover, Zabinas' successes led the Ptolemaic king to break off their alliance, and the latter instead began to support Antiochos VIII (Just. *Epit.* 39. 2. 1–3). The period that follows is even more difficult to reconcile. Alexander Zabinas seems to have been challenged by Antiochos VIII and was defeated.⁹⁴ This defeat led to a retreat to Antiocheia where—according

⁸⁹ Date: Damascus minted continuously in the name of Demetrios II until the Seleukid year 187 (126/5 BCE); SC 2181. 8–10. In the same year, the city started minting coinage for Alexander Zabinas using the same reverse but with changed controls: SC 2248. 1.

⁹⁰ The murder of Demetrios II by Kleopatra in Appian should derive from an account that makes jealousy an explanation for historical events. It was jealousy that led Kleopatra Thea to marry Antiochos VII, and explained the death of Demetrios II: App. *Syr.* 68 (360); Liv. *per.* 60.

⁹¹ While *IGCH* 1454 possibly indicates a closure in 126/5, it is uncertain if Kilikia just fell to Alexander Zabinas or if it was taken in a conquest (as indicated in the lemma for Alexander Zabinas), SC ii.1 p. 441 n. 8; see also SC ii.2 'Appendix 3 – Hoards' p. 83.

⁹² SC 2215–16; strikingly, Alexander Zabinas usually carried no epithets: see now Muccioli 2013: esp. 387–90.

⁹³ e.g. SC 2272.1–2; 2274.1–2 and 2275.

⁹⁴ Jos. *Ant.* 13. 269; Just. *Epit.* 39. 2. 5; Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F32. 23.

to Justin and Diodoros—Alexander plundered a sanctuary in order to obtain revenue (Just. *Epit.* 39. 2. 5; Diod. Sic. 34/5. 28. 1). Apparently, the people of Antiocheia revolted while again removing temple treasures and he was forced out of the city (Just. *Epit.* 39. 2. 6), and in 123/2 (SC 2263) the city began minting coinage in the name of Antiochos VIII. Diodoros, writing about the same episode, notes that his protagonist withdrew to Seleukeia, where he found no refuge. He continued, perhaps by boat, to Poseideion, further south on the coast of the Levant (Diod. Sic. 34/5. 28. 1). More than one account of his death exists. Soon after his flight, Alexander Zabinas was captured (perhaps by Justin's *latrones*) and brought before Antiochos VIII, who led him through the camp and put him to death.⁹⁵

3.1e The Levant in the Second Century: Conclusion

The history of the Seleukid kingdom from the 160s onwards illustrates continuous competition for the royal diadem and control over the political groups within the empire. When reading the evidence with the hindsight that the historical narratives were a later creation, it is strikingly obvious that the stories of kings and usurpers are not very different from one another. Both kings and usurpers took cities, lost cities, won battles, forced the people of Antiocheia into revolt, and granted honours to the Makkabees. Beyond royal actions, this narrative of the second-century Seleukid kingdom also underlines the potency of the groups within the kingdom. The communication between the Seleukid kings, usurpers, and the Makkabees, for instance, illustrates that it was the Makkabees who could decide whom they would acknowledge as king. The Makkabees, however, were not the only audience of royal communication who were transformed into active agents. Other groups could choose who to support as king, and this is what we see in the historical narrative. At times the Seleukid king was accepted, while at other times the usurpers were. It is in this world that the royal offers became even more critical than in the previous period, and they, as well as the reaction of the groups within the empire, will be discussed in the following sections.

⁹⁵ Diod. Sic. 34/5. 28. 2–3; Just. *Epit.* 39. 2. 6. Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F32. 23 attributes his death to suicide.

3.2 IMAGES OF KINGSHIP: THE ROYAL OFFERS

Royal offers, already important during the third century for the stability of kingship, became critical in the second century in a world of competing kings. Contenders were accepted as kings only if they were able to persuade the agents within the empire that their position was viable. Only then did their royal letters work—were felicitous (to borrow the terminology of J. L. Austin’s speech act theory)—and it was under these circumstances that the letters were accepted *as* royal letters and not as a usurper’s pamphlet.⁹⁶ As argued before, it was only then that the king was king (as far as the recipients of their communications were concerned).⁹⁷ Kings and usurpers vying for acceptance is apparent in the historical scenario sketched above, yet the evidence for the transmission of royal offers is limited to the imagery displayed on their coin issues, and the at times distorted literary sources describing their actions. Nevertheless, these accounts provide some insights into individual aspects of the royal image, and thus one aspect of the royal offers.

3.2a Prelude: The Origins of Usurpers

Chapter 2 set out two parameters of third-century usurpation: usurpation based on individual success and usurpation based on royal lineage. In modified forms these parameters also apply to the Seleukid world of the second century. The first group were Seleukid high power-holders. Like their predecessors Achaïos and Molon, these usurpers based their kingship on their previous achievements. Timarchos’ claim was—like that of the third-century usurpers—based on his position in the eastern parts of the empire, but also on the position he had held there under the previous rulers. Tryphon’s relationship with the Seleukid troops from Apameia and his former position under Alexander Balas underline the importance of his former office. The split in the dynasty was an important accelerating element since historical circumstances made it unlikely that individuals could retain their positions (or livelihoods) in the new king’s court.

⁹⁶ J. L. Austin 1975: 12–52; Ma 2000b: 76–7.

⁹⁷ Ma 2000b: 108; Bourdieu 1991: 37–42; Butler 1999: 120–4. For a Roman comparison: Flaig 1992: 174–207; Veyne 1976: 236–8 (not included in Veyne 1990).

The second category of usurpers made reference to royal ancestors, and was also structurally similar to its third-century counterpart, yet the precariousness of the position of these usurpers was amplified. The split in the dynasty allowed Alexander Balas and Alexander Zabinas to make themselves heirs to former kings in direct physical opposition to their contemporaries. While these usurpers initially came from outside the Seleukid sphere, the narrative regarding Alexander Balas strongly underlines the importance of gaining support from former courtiers or the friends of their (supposed) fathers. The support of former kings' friends is, for example, also attested for Demetrios I prior to his landing in the Levant (Pol. 31. 13. 3). These different origins shaped their varied approaches to their individual claims to the diadems, and therefore they will be treated separately.

3.2b Timarchos: A Peripheral Great King

The usurpation of Timarchos stands in between the usurpations of the second century and those of the previous period, both chronologically and systemically, and can thus serve as a good introduction. Timarchos' taking of the diadem bears strong resemblance to Molon's usurpation, as both usurpers used their geographical and political position to claim the diadem. It was their office and their command over Media that provided them with the resources to recruit troops and equip an army large enough to engage the Seleukid troops in battle (Pol. 5. 43. 8). While Timarchos, like his predecessors in Asia Minor and Media, had to persuade the groups in his own area of influence that he was a valid candidate for the diadem, his attempt was also aided by the absence of the Seleukid king. The split in the dynasty can be seen as a trigger for Timarchos' revolt. With the accession of Demetrios I, the fate of Antiochos V and his high courtiers were sealed: the former king and his *ὁ ἐπὶ τῶν πραγμάτων* were executed; Herakleides was exiled. The reoccurrence of this scenario in the narrative of Alexander Balas' accession suggests a pattern of new kings' behaviour towards former kings' high power-holders. The options of Timarchos' political future might have been similarly limited, and to prevent his removal from office he made himself king.

The evidence for Timarchos' royal image and the way he asserted his royal claims to the diadem is limited, but a few elements

nevertheless can be highlighted. Timarchos apparently thought it was necessary or opportune for his kingship to be acknowledged by the senate of Rome (Diod. Sic. 31. 27a). While like the kings of Kappadokia he was presumably aware that he would not receive actual financial or military support (e.g. Pol. 31. 3; 31. 7. 1), Timarchos must have thought that acknowledgement from Rome could support his claim, likely because of Demetrios I's questionable accession. Demetrios I also had not hesitated to seek acknowledgement of his own position (Pol. 31. 33. 1–5; 32. 2. 1–3), and while this was connected to his departure from Rome, it seems to have set a precedent that Roman acknowledgement was an important and perhaps necessary step towards kingship.

On his return, Timarchos allied himself with Artaxias of Armenia. The position of the rulers of Armenia who resubmitted themselves to Seleukid control in the presence of the king (and his army) has been briefly stressed in chapter 1,⁹⁸ and their relationship to Timarchos should not be interpreted differently from their secession and reintegration under Antiochos III (Pol. 8. 23. 1–5) and Antiochos IV (Diod. Sic. 31. 17a). They were local rulers who could not resist a larger army. Nevertheless, Diodoros describes the alliance between these rulers as a *συνμαχία* (Diod. Sic. 31. 27a). While it might be unreasonable to place too much stress on Diodoros' particular phrasing, the relationship between Timarchos and Artaxias seems to have contrasted with Timarchos' relationship with the neighbouring peoples. If this indicated a qualitative difference between Artaxias and the 'other peoples' relationship with Timarchos, one could interpret the alliance between Artaxias and Timarchos as exactly that: an alliance with the Armenian king. In the same way as Seleukos II and certainly Antiochos III had acknowledged rulers' positions in order to combat usurpers in Asia Minor, Timarchos acknowledged Artaxias' kingship. In return, the Armenian ruler recognized Timarchos as king.

Timarchos not only gathered a *στρατόπεδον ἀξιόλογον*, an 'impressive force' (Diod. Sic. 31. 27a), he also used the title of king and began to mint his own royal coinage. However, Timarchos was not just king, as all his coinage identifies him as *βασιλεὺς μέγας*. No earlier Seleukid king had labelled himself as 'Great King' on his coinage. Antiochos I's rendering on the highly formulaic Borsippa cylinder as 'Great King'

⁹⁸ Ch. 1.3.

(*šarru rabbu*) should not give us the impression of an empire-wide image, since throughout the empire we find that he is styled as βασιλεύς. Antiochos III only adopted the Greek title μέγας as his epithet after his eastern campaigns and took the title 'Great King' after his conquest of Koilē Syria.⁹⁹ The adoption of the Greek rendering of the Achaimenid title 'Great King' by Timarchos was a conscious decision to differentiate himself from the traditional empire-wide Seleukid formulae.

Timarchos' use of the title, however, was not an isolated occurrence. The title also appears in other eastern regions during the same period. In central Asia, Eukratides I of Baktria, who presumably reigned from c.170 to 145, was styled as βασιλεὺς μέγας on his coinage, as was the Parthian king Mithridates I on his later coinage (see Figs. 3.1–3.3).¹⁰⁰ It is impossible to determine when exactly Mithridates I began to use the title of 'Great King', since only the dated issues from Seleukeia on the Tigris from the years 173/4 SE (140/39–139/8) offer a *terminus ante quem*.¹⁰¹ The use of the title on the coinage (and in inscriptions outside Babylonia) suggests that during the same period, three rulers used the title of 'Great King', even if the disparity in dating the Parthian material does not enable us to make firm conclusions regarding who was the first ruler to put the title on his coinage, and thus who subsequently employed it as a reference to the other neighbouring king.

⁹⁹ Borsippa cylinder: now Stevens 2014; cf. Sherwin-White 1991: 75–7. King List: CM 4 obv. 10 and 13. Antiochos III: for Ma 2002: 276 the title of 'Great King' under Antiochos III refers to a discourse between the Ptolemaic and Seleukid kings. For a late Seleukid 'Great King': SEG 19. 904 *ed. pr.* Landau 1961; note Fischer 1970: 102–9; see also the summarizing commentary in Boffo 1994: 126–32. For a general discussion of the title: Muccioli 2013: 395–417.

¹⁰⁰ A summary in Muccioli 2013: 401. Eukratides I: Coloru 2009: 209–30; Bopéarchchi 1991: 68–71. It is possible that these were also Eukratides' later issues. Mithridates: *BMC Parthia* 'Period of Mithridates I' nos. 1–13; 16–28; 30–61. The legend on a relief from Khung-e Nouruzi in the south-western province of Khūzestān in modern-day Iran depicts a rider with a band in his hair and the legend: 'Miθridāt the king of kings.' We do not know when Mithridates I took the Elymais and the Susiane, yet the inscription nevertheless reveals the title beyond the coinage: Harmatta 1981: 200–3. Wilson and Assar 2007 argue for a later beginning of the reign of Eukratides I; this, however, does not affect the present argument.

¹⁰¹ Dated coinage: *BMC Parthia* 'Mithridates I' nos. 55–61. Seleukeia/Tigris: Le Rider 1965: 153–4. In the diaries of 141 his title was LUGAL, 'king': AD III 140 A rev. 7; 10; Upper Edge 3.



Fig. 3.1 Tetradrachm of Eukratides, Baktria, c.170–145 BCE, ANS 1970.203.1. Courtesy of the American Numismatic Society.



Fig. 3.2 Tetradrachm of Timarchos, mint Seleukeia/Tigris, c.160 BCE, CSE I 990. Courtesy of Arthur Houghton.



Fig. 3.3 Tetradrachm of Mithridates I, mint Seleukeia/Tigris, mid-141–138 BCE, ANS 1967.152.576. Courtesy of the American Numismatic Society.

The expeditions of the Parthians under Mithridates I must have had some impact on the border regions of the Seleukid empire, including Media. Justin describes outside pressure on the Baktrian kingdom (*Epit.* 41. 6. 3), and it was presumably during these years that the Parthians were able to take two Baktrian satrapies from

Eukratides I (Strab. 11. 11. 2). During these Partho-Baktrian wars Justin also mentions a conflict with 'the Medes' (*Epit.* 41. 6. 6). Mithridates I reigned for a long period of time, and while these campaigns may date to the period discussed here,¹⁰² the passage could also easily refer to a later period, perhaps as late as the early 140s. Therefore, while Timarchos must have been aware of the emergence of Parthian power, it is not possible to ascertain to what degree the Parthians were a threat to his kingdom. Visual competition—attested on the coinage of Eukratides I, Mithridates I, and Timarchos—is apparent, and the royal images might suggest that Timarchos' choice of title illustrates the power dynamics of these kings in their region, largely resulting from a discourse of power east of Babylon.¹⁰³ If Timarchos chose the title with regard to the eastern kings, this does not necessarily exclude the possibility that Timarchos also tried to make a political statement against the Seleukid west.¹⁰⁴

The geopolitical environment of Timarchos' kingship between the eastern kings and the Seleukid west also is illustrated in his coinage. While Timarchos' drachms and bronze coinage largely used stylistic elements that were known in the Seleukid east,¹⁰⁵ his tetradrachms were strikingly different, reminiscent of his royal title (SC 1588–9). At some point during the reign of the Baktrian king Eukratides I, this eastern king minted a very innovative portrait that clearly inspired Timarchos' coinage (see Figs. 3.1 and 3.2).

¹⁰² Wolski 1993: 80; Schippmann 1980: 24; see also Coloru 2009: 217–19.

¹⁰³ See Coloru 2009: 215 for whom the title was adopted during the rivalry with Menander I; cf. Widemann 2009: 168 for whom the title was adopted during the rivalry with Demetrios I, but who sees potential for Parthian inspiration. For Bopearachchi the title was taken after the conquest of India: Bopearachchi 1991: 69. The suggestion of Kosmin 2014: 256 to associate his kingship and his title with that of Media is attractive, yet perhaps downplays these eastern discourses.

¹⁰⁴ Knepper 1989: 46; Ehling 2008: 128; Muccioli 2013: 401.

¹⁰⁵ Bronze coinage features e.g. a typical Nikē holding up a wreath (and in one issue an elephant): SC 1594–1603; 1608. Drachms depict Apollo/Omphalos: SC 1590; 1605, and a Nikē on chariot: SC 1604. Artemis/Anahita: SC 1591–3; 1606. The goddess occurs on the bronze coinage in the Seleukid east during the third century: Antiochos II and Seleukos II in Susa (SC 598; 796); Antiochos III in Seleukeia/Tigris and other mints (e.g. SC 1184; 1220–1); Antiochos IV in Mopsos and Susa (SC 1385–7; 1535). The portrait on these bronze and silver issues of lower denomination might be similar to that found on the clay seals of Seleukeia on the Tigris (Invernizzi 2004: 44, Se 44–6). It is just possible that the 'neutral' style of these royal portraits (on the term, cf. Smith 1988: 46–8; Jaeggi 2008: 68–74) belongs to the very early part of his revolt.

The tetradrachms show a royal portrait on the obverse with a crested Boiotian helmet, embellished more or less by ornaments. The diadem is visible at the neck and the depicted figure wears the *chlamys*, a military cloak. The military imagery on the bust is continued on the reverse, which depicts the *Dioskuroi* as twin riders, brandishing their lances and wearing helmets while their horses are rearing up.¹⁰⁶ It is worth noting that Timarchos (just as Achaïos and Molon before him) employed certain coin types that were employed on Seleukid bronze coinage before his reign. The use of this (presumably) well-known imagery on the silver coinage therefore can be interpreted as a stress on continuity in order to sustain monetary credibility; yet his tetradrachms mark a distinctive break with prominent Seleukid formulae.¹⁰⁷ While clearly coming from a discourse east of Media,¹⁰⁸ it was coinage with this royal imagery that was also struck in Seleukeia on the Tigris.¹⁰⁹ For the people in Babylonia, the troops under his command, and the troops whom he encountered on his campaigns, Timarchos styled himself as 'Great King'. This royal *persona* is most aptly demonstrated by his elaborate tetradrachms that featured military elements on the reverse, and the military portrait of the king who issued these coins. The importance of these tetradrachms also can be ascertained in one of the initial actions of Demetrios I after he had defeated the usurper: the victorious king had his opponent's coinage collected and overstruck. The coin-type that was used for the overstrike was a jugate portrait of

¹⁰⁶ While the twin gods did not appear on Seleukid precious coinage, they featured on the bronze coinages, particularly in the eastern part of the empire, sometimes even in the same riding position: e.g. Antiochos II at Tarsos (SC 565–7); Seleukos II at Nisibis (SC 760); Antiochos IV at Tripolis and Susa (SC 1441; 1532); Antiochos V at Tripolis (SC 1577). For other attestations: e.g. Burkert 1985: 212–13.

¹⁰⁷ See also Ehling 2008: 127–8.

¹⁰⁸ The similarity between Timarchos' precious coinage and the coinage of Eukratides I does not necessitate an alliance between Timarchos and the Baktrian king, either against Demetrios I or against Mithridates I (different: Coloru 2009: 219–23). Since Antiochos III, no Seleukid king had been able to make his way into Baktria, and it seems unlikely that Eukratides saw the Seleukid king as a primary threat. Nevertheless, the Greek elements, the helmet, the *chlamys*, and the *Dioskuroi*, along with the title of 'Great King', possibly refer to an awareness by both kings of growing Parthian power in this period.

¹⁰⁹ SC 1588 is the only issue of Timarchos that is associated with Babylonia, see Houghton 1979.



Fig. 3.4 Tetradrachm of Demetrios I, mint Seleukeia/Tigris, c.160 BCE, CSE I 991. Courtesy of Arthur Houghton.

Demetrios I and his wife Laodike (see Fig. 3.4)—another novelty—and this, too, should speak for the impact of Timarchos' coinage.¹¹⁰

Timarchos spent time, energy, and money to secure acknowledgment of his royal status in Rome. He allied himself with Artaxias of Armenia, and might have acknowledged the latter as king. He styled himself as 'Great King', and while with its neutral character his imagery and his royal portrait on the lower denominational coinage was not significantly different from those of his Seleukid predecessors (despite a potential emphasis on the local character of the coinage), his title, and the imagery of the tetradrachms in particular, differed from Seleukid formulae. Timarchos based his kingship on his position in Media, which he had held since the reign of Antiochos IV, and on his military experience, promising success on his coinage, and perhaps even referring to previous achievements. Timarchos had been able to take and hold Babylonia long enough to mint his own coinage, even if we cannot ascertain how much coinage was minted there. Nevertheless, Demetrios I overcame the usurper relatively quickly.

Following Timarchos' revolt, Media and Babylonia, the last of the Seleukid arteries in the East, were lost to the Seleukid empire after June 148 and in 141 respectively. The Parthian conquest of the Upper Satrapies made a revolt in the absence of the king impossible,¹¹¹ and in this regard Timarchos' revolt closes a chapter in the history of Seleukid usurpers. Yet usurpers did not disappear, nor did usurpation itself vanish. Instead, usurpers competed with the Seleukid king in the same space. As discussed in the introduction of this chapter, this

¹¹⁰ See ch. 3.1a, n. 20.

¹¹¹ Media, Babylonia and the Persian Gulf: see ch. 3.1c, nn. 50 and 51.

made their claims more difficult, yet it also complicated the royal offers of the Seleukid king himself, giving the period a particular dynamic.

3.2c Tryphon: Guardian and Self-made King

It was in the context of the deaths of Alexander Balas and Ptolemaios VI, and Demetrios II's attempt to secure the diadem that Tryphon seized the opportunity to gather former Seleukid troops under his command. Tryphon did not actually claim the diadem at this point, instead he promoted Alexander Balas' son as the new king (Diod. Sic. 33. 4a).¹¹² It was theoretically under the boy's command that Tryphon took the city of Apameia and soon afterwards Antiocheia on the Orontes, forcing Demetrios II out of the city. The troops that Tryphon had been able to gather were presumably largely the troops that Demetrios II had dismissed, meaning the former troops of Alexander Balas (1 Makk. 11. 38; Jos. *Ant.* 13. 129). Although we cannot determine Tryphon's rank under Alexander Balas, the fact that he is described as *philos* of the king, that he had large support from the city of Apameia, and that he was possibly the commander of Antiocheia would suggest that he was prominent among the king's friends and in the political hierarchy of the empire. It is very likely that the perception of Tryphon's position during the reign of the young Antiochos VI is apparent in the description of the astronomical diarists who write of 'the general of . . . and the troops of Antiochos, son of Alexander . . .' (AD III 143 A Flake 20). If we can place any emphasis on the composition of Josephus' narrative, both Tryphon's *de facto* authority and the nominal position of Antiochos VI might further be illustrated in the account of an alliance between Antiochos VI, Tryphon, and Jonathan (1 Makk. 11. 57–9; Jos. *Ant.* 13. 144–6). Josephus writes that Jonathan sent envoys to both Antiochos VI and Tryphon (Jos. *Ant.* 13. 147), which becomes meaningful when it is compared to Josephus' passage regarding Antiochos V and his guardian Lysias, in which the king, despite his young age, was the only actor (e.g. Jos. *Ant.* 12. 366–82).

¹¹² Dionysios Petosorapis's care for the young Ptolemaios VIII bears a remarkable similarity. Ultimately, however, he did not make himself king: Veisse 2004: 99–112.



Fig. 3.5 Tetradrachm of Antiochos VI, mint Antiocheia/Orontes, c. mid-143–142 BCE, CSE I 234. Courtesy of Arthur Houghton.

While the royal imagery of Antiochos VI makes reference to his Seleukid predecessors, the reverses depicting the *Dioskuroi*, the Boiotian helmet, and the panther were particular to him (Fig. 3.5).¹¹³ Tryphon successfully promoted a son of Alexander Balas to the diadem, and not only took two of the most important cities of the Seleukid empire, but also made an alliance with the people of Judaea, while cities in the Levant and Kilikia started to mint silver coins in the name of the young king. He was unable to gain the acceptance of Babylonia, and other cities in the Levant and Kilikia also continued to mint in the name of Demetrios II. Nevertheless, in these first years Tryphon's position and the kingship of Antiochos VI looked prosperous. In the Seleukid year 171 (142/1 BCE), however, the last coinage for Antiochos VI was minted; the king was dead.¹¹⁴

This moment is particularly instructive for Tryphon's royal offers, as it was now that he made himself the boy king's successor. He was eager to be accepted by the troops and displayed continuity in the coinage. One issue of drachms in the name of Antiochos VI depicts a spiked Boiotian helmet (see Fig. 3.6). The letter style and controls are very similar to those of Tryphon's issues from Antiocheia (SC 2029–30), and this helmet now became an important element in Tryphon's coinage.¹¹⁵ But beyond this continuity, Tryphon broke

¹¹³ Seleukid elements are the radiated portrait on most issues on the obverse and the Apollo/Omphalos on the reverse: SC 2001–2; 2010A–11 and 2018. *Dioskuroi*: SC 2000; 2008–10. Boiotian helmet: SC 2003. Panther: SC 2004; 2012. There are also 'local' reverses, such as those depicting Sandan (SC 1996–7) and the eagle for the coinage on Phoenician standard (SC 2020; 2022; 2026).

¹¹⁴ SC 2020 (Byblos); 2022. 3 (Ptolemais); 2026 (Askalon).

¹¹⁵ The interpretation of these issues of Antiochos VI is difficult, since there might be too many variables to come to a definite conclusion. If one assumes that this helmet



Fig. 3.6 Drachm of Antiochos VI, mint Antiocheia/Orontes, c. mid-143–142 BCE, CSE II 553. Courtesy of Arthur Houghton.

with conventions of Seleukid imagery on his coinage. It perhaps was only now that he adopted his new name, ‘Tryphon’, although it is possible it was a nickname by which he was generally known.¹¹⁶ While Molon, Achaios, and Timarchos continued to use their name, Diodotos consciously chose the name Tryphon over any other possible royal name. The name evoked the concept of Hellenistic *tryphē*, luxury. *Tryphē*, a Hellenistic royal virtue, had always been a part of royal Seleukid representation.¹¹⁷ For example, in his Attic comedies, Antiphanes refers to the excess (*ὑπεροχῇ*) of Seleukos I in the first quarter of the third century (PCG II Antiphanes F185, pp. 414–15); Polybios refers to the sumptuous weddings of Antiochos III (Pol. 5. 43. 3–4; Pol. 20. 8); and Heliodoros describes a fountain of wine under Antiochos IV in Antiocheia (FGrHist 373 F8). Yet so far *tryphē* had never been a part of royal Seleukid portraiture, iconography, or titulature.

was by choice the royal emblem of Tryphon, dating this coinage to the late reign of Antiochos VI would imply that Tryphon was preparing the ground for taking the diadem before the death of Antiochos VI (Houghton 1992b: 138). It also is possible, however, that the helmet was only later chosen to be part of Tryphon’s royal image (and this could then give us no information whether Tryphon planned the death of Antiochos VI). One could further argue that the coins of Antiochos VI with the Boiotian helmet were the first issues of Tryphon’s reign. The parameters of other coinages depicting deceased rulers are different, and therefore this construction is tempting. One should note, however, the discussion in ch. 1.1b, n. 78.

¹¹⁶ See ch. 3.1c, n. 61.

¹¹⁷ Seleukid luxuries in context with meals: Vössing 2004: 145–50. The well-known Ptolemaic example can serve as an example of how *tryphē* could be employed by Hellenistic monarchs: Heinen 1978: 188–92; Heinen 1983: 120–4; cf. Lenfant 2007: 60 n. 5.

Difference and distinction also became apparent in Tryphon's royal epithet. Tryphon's royal title on his coins was βασιλεὺς Τρύφων Αὐτοκράτωρ in the genitive.¹¹⁸ The epithet is highly unusual and is presumably neither connected with either Seleukid or Ptolemaic usage of the title of *stratēgos autokratōr*, or with the Greek form of the Roman *imperator*, for which evidence is lacking before 69.¹¹⁹ Instead Parthian usage before Tryphon's reign may provide some comparative evidence for the origins of the title.¹²⁰ Given the geographical distance of the Parthian sphere of influence from the Levant, it should not be assumed that it was the Parthian usage of the epithet that influenced Tryphon's choice. Instead, both rulers referred to similar semantics in their differentiation from the Seleukid kings.¹²¹ Of course, a wide variety of military epithets were available, but many of them, such as Nikatōr, Kallinikos, or Sōtēr would have referred to the Seleukid dynasty. Tryphon's epithet, however, emphasized his own achievements. Differentiation between Tryphon and the Seleukid kings is also apparent in his decision to break with the Seleukid era and to use his own regnal years.¹²² While we simply do not know whether other usurpers introduced their own regnal years,

¹¹⁸ The title of βασιλεὺς αὐτοκράτωρ is a misnomer and an invention by scholarship. Bevan misinterpreted the name and saw a connection to *stratēgos autokratōr*: Bevan 1902: II 231 with App. Q. Hoffmann 1939a: 721 misread Babelon 1890: cxxxviii. Later scholarship: Ehling 2008: 180; Baldus 1970; see also Fischer 1972: 208 n. 38.

¹¹⁹ See now Muccioli 2013: 419–21. *Stratēgos autokratōr*: Seleukid office: Pol. 5. 45. 6. There is at least one Ptolemaic attestation under Ptolemaios VIII Euergetes II: *I.Délos* 1528. 5–6; perhaps also *SEG* 31. 1521. 6–7. For Ehling 2008: 180 the epithet refers to Ptolemaic influence; cf. Philip II as *stratēgos autokratōr*: Diod. Sic. 16. 89. Roman *Imperator*: Metellus Creticus (69 BCE): *IGRR* 1. 955. Pompeius (66–62 BCE): *IGRR* 3. 869. For the use of *dictator*: Pol. 3. 86. 7.

¹²⁰ While the title became prominent in the Parthian dynasty from the first century onwards, there is one early hoard: *IGCH* 1798. The royal name on the issues was Ἀρσάκης Αὐτοκράτωρ in the genitive. Due to the other coins in the hoard, the initial editors attribute the coins to Arsakes I or Arsakes II (c.209), otherwise to Mithridates I (mid-second century): Abgarians and Sellwood 1971. For later uses: a tetradrachm attributed to either Orodes or Sinatrukes (both in the first half of the first century) carries the epithet *autokratōr* along with *philopatros*, *epiphanēs*, and *philellēnos*: Sellwood 1980: 90; *BMC Parthia*, xxx and 42; cf. Dobbins 1975: 41.

¹²¹ Coloru 2009: 158 suggests a similarity to the use of *karanos* in the Achaimenid empire. Cf. Gaslain 2009: 33.

¹²² Not only 'following the Ptolemaic example', as suggested by Ehling 2008: 180. The Antigonids counted their regnal years (e.g. *I.Labraunda* 7. 15), as did the Attalid kings, at least in the second century (e.g. *TAM V* 1. 221 and 486b).



Fig. 3.7 Tetradrachm of Tryphon, mint Antiocheia/Orontes, c.142–138 BCE, CSE II 563. Courtesy of Arthur Houghton.

Tryphon's kingship in a region where it had become usual to put the regnal years on the issued coins signifies a conscious rupture.

The theme of differentiation continues in the imagery on Tryphon's coinage. It largely depicts variations of one portrait on the obverse and two reverse types that both carry the name of the king. The prominent reverse type depicts the aforementioned Boiotian helmet.¹²³ The portrait depicts a man with a 'Greek nose',¹²⁴ an emphasized supraorbital ridge, a thick neck, with his face turned to the right side and slightly razed. His round cheeks and the fold of his neck beneath the Adam's apple give him a slightly chubby appearance. There is no particular emphasis on muscles or other facial features thereby giving the face a more idealized demeanour. The most dominant element in this portrait is the hair: it falls in long waves, leaking over the diadem, and is swept behind his ears, nearly reaching his shoulders (see Fig. 3.7). Both the facial expression and the wild hair were later adopted by Seleukid and other monarchs, including Antiochos VII, Antiochos VIII, and Mithridates VI of Pontos.¹²⁵

¹²³ A secondary reverse type features the eagle found on the Phoenician standard coinage in the mints of Byblos (SC 2042–3), Ptolemais (SC 2045–6), and Askalon (SC 2047); on this coinage, see Appendix C.

¹²⁴ The 'Greek nose' describes the characteristic nose of classical Greek sculpture that loses its prominence in the Hellenistic period. It is characterized only by a slight indentation of the nasal root at the suture where the nasal bone and the frontal bone meet: see the Delphi charioteer; the god from Cape Artemisium: e.g. Boardman 1985: 52–3.

¹²⁵ Smith 1988: 121–2; Fleischer 1991: 68–9. For later Seleukids: Antiochos VII is depicted with longer, wavier hair falling at the neck (e.g. SC 2055–61); Antiochos VIII is often depicted with shorter, but very energetic curls (e.g. SC 2281; 2286; 2293–4). This also is continued under many subsequent rulers; e.g. Mithridates VI: de Callatay 1997: pl. 1–13.

The reverse depicts a Boiotian helmet, topped with an elaborate spike, with attached cheek-pieces.¹²⁶ Helmets were not completely unknown in the Seleukid kingdom as Timarchos had recently issued a helmeted portrait, and some bronze issues from Aï Khanoum show a very similar imagery (SC 448–51).¹²⁷ Nevertheless, the depiction of helmets in Seleukid royal imagery ceased after Antiochos I and only re-emerged in the second century under Eukratides I, Timarchos, and Kammaškiri of Elam, and then largely in the East.¹²⁸ The military connotations of a helmet are obvious.¹²⁹ P. Dintsis argues that these helmets (and particularly the Boiotian helmet) made their way into the East during the campaigns of Alexander III, giving them a Macedonian connection, and the Baktrian monarchs employed these helmets on their imagery.¹³⁰ Regardless of whether or not the helmet became the helmet of Alexander the Great's army, for the successors of Alexander, and in particular the rulers of Baktريا, this helmet as well as the *kausia* became a signifier for Greekness.¹³¹ Moreover, third- and second-century links to Macedonia can be ascertained since Philip V and Perseus depicted pilos and konos helmets on their coinage as well.¹³² Also, the helmet worn by the warriors from the necropolis of Sidon look rather similar to that of Tryphon.¹³³ The semantics of the helmet are evidently twofold: it combined military power and prowess,

¹²⁶ Dintsis 1986: 17–20, see also pl. 4–7.

¹²⁷ See Bernard and Guillaume 1980: 23 who also suggest the helmet is a reference to Antiochos I's Galatian victory.

¹²⁸ Eukratides and Timarchos: see ch. 3.2b. Kammaškiri: Le Rider 1965: no. 89. Alexander Balas: SC 1790. Demetrios II: SC 1991. The depiction of helmets on bronze issues in the 140s under Alexander Balas and Demetrios II (presumably from Seleukeia on the Tigris) might be connected to the re-emergence of the helmet in iconographic usage in the middle of the second century.

¹²⁹ Helmets as grave goods and decorations: Macedonia: Andronikos 1984: 140–6; Miller 1993: 53 and pl. 9 and 12; Tsimbidou-Avlonti 2005: pl. 25b; Pisidia: Pekridou 1986: 50–4. Booty: e.g. the frieze at the temple of Athena Nikēphoros at Pergamon: Bohn 1885: 102–4.

¹³⁰ Dintsis 1986: 17–20 and 71–3.

¹³¹ For the *kausia* as Alexander the Great's hat: Ephippos *FGrHist.* 126. F5; Saatsoglou-Paliadeli 1993; Janssen 2007: esp. ch. 5 for references; see still Ritter 1965: 55–62. Successors: e.g. Demetrios Poliorketes: Plut. *Pyrrh.* 11. 13; Antigonos Gonatas: Val. Max. 5. 1 ext. 4; for a wider reception: Tsimbidou-Avlonti 2005: 24–5 and 35.

¹³² Antigonid coinage: e.g. *SNG Cop.Mace* III 1241–3 and 1253 (Philip V); 1282–8 (Philip V and Perseus).

¹³³ See e.g. the stele of Dioskurides of Balboursa in the Istanbul Archaeology Museum. Roberto Rossi is preparing a new study on these stelai from Sidon.

and it established a link with Macedonian soldiery and Macedonianess or Greekness, as perceived in the Hellenistic East.

Tryphon's helmet, however, was more than simply a reference to the Macedonian military; it is the fine execution and its elaborate design that is instructive. A very large horn protrudes from the front of the helmet and the ends of a diadem leap out from the rear.¹³⁴ Both the size and the adornment of the helmet are reminiscent of Plutarch's depiction of luxurious royal weaponry belonging to Alexander and Pyrrhos (Plut. *Alex.* 32. 8–11; *Pyrrh.* 16. 11). The helmet on the reverse of the coinage stands in relation to the name of the king and to the portrait on the obverse. In his coinage, Tryphon created a royal image that had not been transmitted before on coinage in the Seleukid kingdom. He elaborated the energetic references to Alexander the Great, which also had been employed by Molon, and had appeared in the Seleukid repertoire in the mid-second century.¹³⁵ Moreover, he depicted a piece of elaborated military weaponry as his main reverse type, and placed a strong emphasis on *tryphē* on both the obverse and the reverse of his coinage. Thus, his royal image not only tried to underline military success and prowess, it also promised wealth and splendour.¹³⁶

Tryphon's military successes, and his royal image of prowess and luxury, did not serve him in his attempted relationships with Rome. Diodoros describes how Tryphon sent a precious golden Nikē to the Roman people in order to be acknowledged by the senate like other kings in the Levant: a hope that remained unfulfilled (Diod. Sic. 33. 28a).¹³⁷ With Rome's rejection, the usurpation of Tryphon gives us a further insight into the nature of kingship on the local spot. We have seen how the acceptance from Rome was important for individuals who wanted to become king, yet the impact of Tryphon's rejection seems insubstantial.¹³⁸ His relationship with the people of Judaea was strained following his capture of Jonathan, and it is unlikely that the Makkabees would have rather accepted a king who had been

¹³⁴ The ornaments on the helmet vary and might indicate different mints: Seyrig 1950: 8–9. Note, however, SC ii.1 p. 337. The interpretations of Ehling 1997 on the origins of the horn are rejected here.

¹³⁵ Bohm 1989: 120–7. See also ch. 4.1c.

¹³⁶ For luxury at the Ptolemaic court, see n. 117.

¹³⁷ See Appendix D.

¹³⁸ One could further raise the question to what degree this would have been known in the Levant in the short term.

acknowledged by Rome. Also, when it came to his troops, his authority does not seem to have been questioned, particularly because the evidence suggests that defection from Tryphon's ranks only occurred once Antiochos VII had gained a bridgehead in the Levant.

Tryphon's royal image incorporated iconographical elements that were known in the Seleukid kingdom. However, it was the combination and development of these elements that led to a new individual royal image that was unique, and would stress his individual kingship. He emphasized some continuity with the reign of his ward, yet he also clearly created an image that was consciously differentiated, which is likewise apparent in his abandonment of the Seleukid era. His emphasis on elements from Alexander's imagery, the development of his hair in a highly energetic style, as well as the luxurious elements of his imagery and his royal name promised his troops success and abundant wealth. The impact of this coinage and his portrait also can be seen in the way its style would influence the development of royal portraiture from this period onwards. Tryphon's stress on abundance also can be seen in his precious gift to Rome, in particular if we follow Diodorus' stress on its value of ten thousand gold staters (33. 28a), and is perhaps still reminiscent in the note of the early imperial author Frontinus who wrote that one of the reasons why Tryphon was able to escape at one point was because he scattered money along the way which delayed his capturers (*Str.* 2. 13. 2).

3.2d Alexander Balas: Former King's Friends and the Image of Alexander

Alexander Balas was not the first claimant to the diadem who came to the Seleukid Levant from the outside the empire; both Antiochos IV and Demetrios I had similarly done so before him. However, Alexander Balas was the first usurper to compete with a Seleukid king who was not a child. Therefore, those who were promoting the king must have been aware of the political competition in the Seleukid kingdom as soon as Alexander Balas reached the Levant. The choices made regarding Alexander's royal image must have been crucial to attracting as many followers as possible to overcome Demetrios I, who had already defeated Timarchos earlier in his reign, and it is these choices that offer us insight into Alexander Balas' royal offers.

Stories about the outset of Alexander's claim to kingship put emphasis on his relationship with his father. Polybios writes how after arriving in Rome, Herakleides presented Alexander and his sister Laodike to the senate as the true children of the late Antiochos IV (Pol. 33. 18. 5–13). This account is mirrored in Diodoros (who might rely on Polybios' account), who writes about Alexander as a young man whose pretence to be a son of Antiochos IV was made credible by his similar age and overall resemblance to the late son of Antiochos IV (Diod. Sic. 31. 32a). His bloom of youth (*ὥραιότης*) made him similar to Antiochos V and perhaps to royal virtues in general. Both Diodoros and Polybios leave no doubt about their opinions about Alexander's ancestry: he pretended to be a son of a king, but the story was made up, and in Polybios' narrative the Roman senators are fully aware of this. Although Herakleides emphasized the children's real descent (*κατὰ φύσιν*) from Antiochos IV, the moderates (*μέτριοι τῶν ἀνθρώπων*) were not pleased and clearly loathed Herakleides' charlatanry (*γοητεία*)—yet the majority was seduced and a *consultum* that Alexander could claim his father's kingship was drawn up (Pol. 33. 18. 9–13).

If we assume some historicity in these accounts, the promoters of Alexander Balas thought it advantageous to present him as a son of Antiochos IV in Rome. This was surely a carefully constructed image of a king who wanted to claim his *πατρῶος ἀρχή*, his father's kingdom (Pol. 33. 18. 7). We will never know whether Alexander Balas *was* the son of Antiochos IV, and this is in the end not decisive either.¹³⁹ What we find is a royal image of a prince, and—as far as Roman senators were concerned—the image worked. Polybios, writing close to the events, openly challenges this image in his account. It is possible that there were obvious cracks in the royal image of the prince, and this was common knowledge to all careful observers at the time. It is equally possible, however, that both Polybios' and Diodoros' account refers to a counter image of a king that was created to cast doubt on Alexander's claim to the diadem in his fight with Demetrios I. The ancestry of Alexander Balas might have been challenged already at the outset of his usurpation, nevertheless his supporters chose this image as the most persuasive one to gather wide support.

¹³⁹ See e.g. *HCP* III: 557; Will 1982: 374–5; Ehling 2008: 146. Ogden 1999: 141–6 uses Alexander Balas to identify an attempt by Antiochos III to create legitimate heirs.

Who were the supporters of Alexander Balas? Polybios mentions those who were willing to assist him ‘*τοὺς βουλομένους συμπράττειν αὐτῷ*’ (Pol. 33. 18. 8). While Attalos II seems to have been instrumental in setting up the usurper to send him to Rome, it is unlikely that he did more than that. Despite Attalos II’s interest in a new king in the Seleukid empire, there are no further attestations of Attalid relations with Alexander Balas.¹⁴⁰ Alexander’s supporters were those around Herakleides, the former friend of Antiochos IV. The expulsion of Herakleides and the usurpation of Timarchos may be indicative of courtiers’ precarious position after the change in monarchs. Also, Ammonios’ murder of ‘all the friends’ of King Demetrios in Antiocheia (Liv. *per.* 50) illustrates possible consequences for kingless courtiers.¹⁴¹ Although Herakleides disappears from the historical record after making preparations in Ephesos for Alexander Balas’ landing on the Levantine coast, his actions underline former courtiers’ potential influence over the affairs of the Seleukid kingdom.¹⁴² In Justin’s account of the accession of Alexander Balas, it was the *plebs* of Antiocheia who revolted against Demetrios I and who received the new king (*Epit.* 35. 1. 3–6). Although the account is confused, it is just possible that also here we see the remnants of this group of supporting royal friends who Justin casts into the role of the Antiochene *plebs* in his narrative. If indeed we should interpret the early image of the usurper to be a well-constructed initiative, the name given to the supposed son of Antiochos IV was not Antiochos or Seleukos, but rather Alexander, a fact that is echoed in Justin’s account (*Epit.* 35. 1. 7): Alexander Balas set out to usurp the Seleukid kingdom as a son of a Seleukid king, but his name was not Seleukid at all. It is this relationship with the image of Alexander on the one hand, and that of Antiochos IV on the other hand, that also can be ascertained more clearly once the king was within the Seleukid empire.

Once landed in the Levant, Alexander began to strike his own coinage. With the use of epithets and the deity on the reverse, Alexander made a clear reference to his royal father. He employed the Zeus Nikēphoros type, which had been introduced under

¹⁴⁰ See, however, a different view in n. 24.

¹⁴¹ Herakleides and Timarchos: App. Syr. 45 (235); see also ch. 3.1a; cf. Pol. 31. 13. 3 on the courtiers of Seleukos IV who had left the kingdom during the reign of Antiochos IV.

¹⁴² See Otto 1912: 468.



Fig. 3.8 Tetradrachm of Alexander Balas, mint Antiocheia/Orontes, 150–146 BCE, CSE II 447. Courtesy of Arthur Houghton.

Antiochos IV, presumably to underline the distinction between his coinage and that of his adversary.¹⁴³ Moreover, his epithet *Θεοπάτωρ* makes explicit allusions to his ‘divine’ father.¹⁴⁴ Although Alexander Balas also had issued coinage with the usual Apollo on the Omphalos reverse and continued the Seleukid era, his royal coinage does not show an active attempt to follow Seleukid royal formulae and symbols. Instead he referred to one specific predecessor, developed these references, and established his very own image.

Apart from some issues of the royal image that contain softer features and occasionally the military cloak, the imagery on the silver coinage during Balas’ reign is relatively homogenous, suggesting a standardized portrait.¹⁴⁵ The portraits of Alexander Balas from his primary mint depicted him with very pronounced masculine facial features, a large head, thick neck, and in particular an emphasized supraorbital ridge, further emphasized by the relative small size of his eyes (see Figs. 3.8 and C.1).¹⁴⁶ All these elements—the heavy features, the Greek nose, and the wild hair—are references to the imagery of Herakles and Alexander the Great, and were employed by

¹⁴³ See e.g. Antiocheia on the Orontes: Antiochos IV: SC 1396–7; 1400. Alexander Balas: SC 1781–2. Antiochos V also employed the Zeus Nikēphoros type at Antiocheia: SC 1574–6.

¹⁴⁴ Antiochos IV appeared on the majority of his coin issues as *θεὸς Ἐπιφανής*: e.g. Antiocheia on the Orontes: SC 1396–1401; 1404–6; 1408–15, and this also is clearly alluded to in 1 Makk. 10. 1.

¹⁴⁵ The issue from the Persian Gulf deviates from the ‘standard’ image: SC 1866.

¹⁴⁶ e.g. SC 1781–2. For the prominence of the mint: Hoover and Houghton forthcoming, and also e.g. *IGCH* 1809 in Susa and 1813 near Teheran.

Alexander's successors, particularly Lysimachos.¹⁴⁷ While an *anastolē* was also employed by both Antiochos IV and Demetrios I on some issues (SC 1400; 1678), Alexander Balas' royal portrait develops this motive further. It is this imagery that underlines the most important aspect of Alexander's royal *persona*, his royal name: Alexander.¹⁴⁸ A clear reference to his 'divine' father was made, yet his imagery and his royal name, Alexander Balas, also referred explicitly to the memory of Alexander the Great. It was this image that Alexander Balas wished to convey to his troops who followed him in defeating the Seleukid king in battle, and who acknowledged him as king.

Beyond the royal coinage, Alexander Balas' alliances with other powers are exemplary of his royal offers, and two alliances in particular reveal an image of a king in the Levant who displayed his relationship with other royal houses, and who made concessions to strengthen his own position within the empire. As detailed above, as soon as Alexander Balas occupied Ptolemais, he tried to make an alliance with the Makkabees.¹⁴⁹ Alexander Balas offered the Makkabees more concessions than any of his predecessors, and he was the first pretender who confirmed the high priesthood to the Makkabaeen leader, thus making Jonathan the head of the Jewish community (1 Makk. 10. 20; Jos. *Ant.* 13. 45). Up to this point, the Seleukid kings had acknowledged Makkabaeen power, but still favoured different Judaeen groups for the high priesthood. Since the death of the high priest Alkimos (1 Makk. 9. 54–6), Demetrios I also had accepted Jonathan's power, but the high priesthood of Jerusalem had been left vacant (Jos. *Ant.* 20. 237).¹⁵⁰ Although Alexander Balas' official granting of the high priesthood would have been void if he had not been able to establish himself in the Seleukid empire, Jonathan and the Makkabees were able to use this promotion to diminish opposition within Jerusalem. Other groups' possibilities were limited: the members of the Judaeen elite in the *akra*, for example, received no outside support. Alexander decided to bring the Makkabaeen group as close to him as possible, and he ignored the wishes of the other Judaeen factions (1 Makk. 10. 61), a policy he continued throughout

¹⁴⁷ For the portrait of Alexander: Smith 1988: 58–64; Fleischer 1991: 60–3. Lysimachos: Mørkholm 1991: 81–2; *contra* Queyrel 2003: 229. For a recent discussion on early Hellenistic coin portraiture: Kroll 2007: 114–17.

¹⁴⁸ Bohm 1989: 105–16.

¹⁴⁹ See ch. 3.1b.

¹⁵⁰ On the vacancy of the high priesthood: see Burgmann 1980: 148–51; see also Chrubasik forthcoming b.



Fig. 3.9 Tetradrachm of Alexander Balas, mint Ptolemais, 150–145 BCE, CSE I 407. Courtesy of Arthur Houghton.

his reign. Alexander elaborated these grants on the occasion of his wedding (1 Makk. 10. 59–60; *Jos. Ant.* 13. 83–5), and made further concessions when Demetrios II began to challenge his rule (*Jos. Ant.* 13. 102). Although the evidence might distort our picture, it appears that Alexander Balas' politics had their desired effect: the people of Judaea seem to have only joined sides with Demetrios II following Alexander's death (*Jos. Ant.* 13. 123–5).

After Alexander Balas had defeated Demetrios I, he sought out an alliance with Ptolemaic Egypt, an alliance that was ratified by his marriage to a Ptolemaic princess. K. Ehling understands this alliance as very influential to Alexander Balas' reign,¹⁵¹ and while this is surely the case, its dynamics have been largely misinterpreted. A series of tetradrachms—the so-called wedding coinage—issued by the royal mint at Ptolemais (notably on Attic standard), illustrates the importance of this diplomatic success for the new king in the Levant. It depicted on the obverse a double portrait of a man and a woman, presumably the royal couple (SC 1841).¹⁵² The double portrait is the first Hellenistic royal portrait to show the queen in front of the king. Her features are smaller than her husband's, she is veiled, and bears divine attributes, such as the cornucopia and the *kalathos*. The king's portrait, which follows the standard portrait, is, however, proportionally bigger to the portrait of the queen; both wear a diadem (see Fig. 3.9).

Double portraits were not common on coinage in the Seleukid kingdom. The first Seleukid double portrait of a royal couple was introduced under Demetrios I (see Fig. 3.4), presumably amplifying

¹⁵¹ This is ultimately based on Volkmann 1925; see Ehling 2008: 154–6.

¹⁵² There is also an additional gold issue depicting Kleopatra Thea on the obverse, and a cornucopia and the title βασιλίσσα Κλεοπάτρα in the genitive on the reverse: SC 1840.

the Seleukid royal house over the defeated usurper Timarchos.¹⁵³ Stylistically, Demetrios I's double portrait follows the rules of the far more common double portraits from Ptolemaic Egypt.¹⁵⁴ Typically, the queen was depicted behind the monarch and the emphasis of the portraiture was on unity, illustrated through similar facial expression and bodily features; also, no more than the face of the queen is visible. This stress on dynastic unity is also apparent in the double portrait of Demetrios I and his wife (SC 1686–9). The coinage of Alexander Balas combined two individual portraits. The display of the female portrait in front of the male also enabled the introduction of another feature: variations in size. While the placement of Kleopatra gives the queen a prominent position on the coinage, it is far-fetched to interpret this as her dominance over Alexander's reign.¹⁵⁵ It is probable that the queen was intended to underline royal continuity and stability, perhaps supported by the use of the *cornucopiae* and other divine attributes in her coinage.¹⁵⁶ The most important aspect of this coin, however, was that her depiction in the front serves to amplify Alexander's larger features in the back, and therefore the coinage also illustrates Alexander's image of masculinity and physical strength as depicted on his individual coinage. The coin therefore is likely to stress the importance of Alexander Balas' diplomatic feat, the union of the royal couple, but it also underlines the image of Alexander Balas as a king, as portrayed on his other coinage.

Alexander Balas' coinage from the Phoenician cities that bore an eagle on the reverse also has been thought to demonstrate a Ptolemaic dominance over Alexander Balas' reign, since the eagle was commonly associated with Ptolemaic money. In this instance, however, the eagle became a Seleukid signifier for coinage on the (lighter) Phoenician standard—minted for local consumption—and should not be associated with the Ptolemaic king, as sometimes suggested.¹⁵⁷ The whole interpretative package of Ptolemaic dominance collapses

¹⁵³ For a dynastic plan: Ogden 1999: 133–52. It is possible that this portrait relies on its counterparts in the Babylonian clay seals from the earlier period: Invernizzi 2004: 42, Se 28.

¹⁵⁴ Ptolemaic portrait: e.g. Svoronos 603–6; 608–9; 613–25; 1247–8. Seleukid portrait: SC 1686–9. This more common type is also seen on one of Alexander Balas' bronze issues: SC 1861.

¹⁵⁵ Ehling 2008: 155 argues along these lines. For the imagery: Fleischer 1991: 60–3.

¹⁵⁶ Fleischer 1991: 76–7.

¹⁵⁷ Ehling 2008: 156. On the eagle coinage on Phoenician standard, see Appendix C.

quickly under thorough scrutiny. While for H. Volkmann the court of Alexander Balas was located in Ptolemais, there is no evidence to suggest a royal court only in this particular city.¹⁵⁸ Similarly, the ethnic origins of Alexander Balas' chancellor in Egypt remain speculative. While the name Ammonios is certainly a reference to Ammon, the occurrence of the same name on mainland Greece, the islands, and in Asia Minor and Macedonia during the second century does not demonstrate a direct connection between Alexander Balas' chancellor and Egypt.¹⁵⁹ Overall, the construction of Alexander Balas as a Ptolemaic puppet is misleading. Alexander Balas had a strong interest in establishing an alliance with Ptolemaios VI, and he thought it was advantageous to display this alliance on his coinage to his troops.

What then were the elements of Alexander Balas' royal offers? In addition to invoking reference to his father, in choosing his royal name and royal imagery, Alexander Balas aligned himself more strongly than any Seleukid king or usurper before him with Alexander, emphasizing that it was his personal achievements, his masculinity, and his prowess that made it possible for him to be king. The importance of the name Alexander, regardless of whether it was chosen by his initial supporters or by himself, is revealed in the continued use of the 'Alexander' image throughout his reign. He attempted to strengthen his acceptance through a dynastic marriage, and he emphasized this marriage in his coinage to his troops; however, this alliance does not illustrate Ptolemaic dominance over the court of Alexander Balas. While no evidence remains for the continuing relationship between both kingdoms, Ptolemaios VI's invasion of the Levant, perhaps in the context of the Parthian invasion of Media and the appearance of Demetrios II, might illustrate the state of this alliance in the early 140s. Apart from his troops, the most important audience for Alexander Balas seems to have been the Makkabaeen group of Jerusalem. It was his acknowledgement of the Makkabees in the high priesthood that enabled him to maintain a

¹⁵⁸ Ehling 2008: 155, following Volkmann 1925: 406. The marriage in Ptolemais and the handing over of the public affairs of Antiocheia to Hierax and Diodotos (Diod. Sic. 33. 3) have served as indicators of Alexander's court at Ptolemais; compare Liv. 35. 13. 4.

¹⁵⁹ A quick search in the *LGPN* reveals that the name was common in Egypt with attestations in other regions and in Macedonia in particular, and thus cannot support Ehling's interpretation of Ammonios as Alexander Balas' Ptolemaic 'watchdog': Ehling 1998: 103; Ehling 2008: 155.

continuous alliance with this powerful agent, and he tried to deepen this relationship by continuing to issue grants to Jonathan and Simon. While the fact that the Makkabees do not seem to have defected from Alexander Balas might give some indication of Alexander Balas' diplomatic success, his acknowledgement of the Makkabees also accelerated their subsequent rise and prominence. The success of Alexander Balas' kingship is ultimately written within the narrative of his final defeat by Ptolemaios VI at the Oinoparas River. Not only was Alexander Balas able to flee the battlefield,¹⁶⁰ but Josephus further emphasizes that the Ptolemaic troops were not immediately able to remove their wounded king to a safe place (*Ant.* 13. 117). Of course this story—in conjunction with the narrated death of Ptolemaios VI soon thereafter—might stem from a dramatic narrative account; it also could suggest, however, that the end of Alexander Balas' kingdom was not a guarantee during this battle.

3.2e Alexander Zabinas and a Deceased King

The usurpation of Alexander Zabinas was closely connected with the military conflict between Demetrios II and Ptolemaios VIII Euergetes II, but aside from individual episodes, Alexander's royal offers are poorly attested. For example, it is only the dated coinage of Antiocheia (SC 2229) that informs us of his relationship with the city as early as 129/8. His royal portrait depicts a youthful man with curly hair, wearing the diadem (see Fig. 3.10).¹⁶¹ Only in Askalon is



Fig. 3.10 Drachm of Alexander Zabinas, mint Antiocheia/Orontes, 128–122 BCE, CSE II 697. Courtesy of Arthur Houghton.

¹⁶⁰ See ch. 3.1b.

¹⁶¹ See also Fleischer 1991: 75.

he depicted with a *chlamys*.¹⁶² The overall portrait was more delicate and idealized than that of Alexander Balas, but it was most importantly younger than that of his contemporary Demetrios II. Beyond his portrait, Alexander Zabinas' royal coinage reveals little about his royal offers when compared to his usurping predecessors, and may suggest a changed dynamic in the organization of Seleukid coinage. The bronze coinage presumably cannot offer any clues to a consciously constructed royal image,¹⁶³ and while the usage of the Zeus Nikēphoros type on most of his precious reverses might be a reference to his supposed ancestors, they were also the most common reverse type of Demetrios II (interestingly, not under Antiochos VII). Also, the large number of other reverse types, particularly on the bronze coinage, does not suggest a specific preference for certain types as in the earlier period.¹⁶⁴ Aside from this variety, however, two conscious aspects of difference seem present: his portrayed youth and his name. The depiction of a beardless, idealized young man contrasted with the reigning Demetrios II, who was depicted with a long beard on most precious coinage during his second reign. Moreover, his royal name alluded both to Alexander the Great and to his supposed father Alexander Balas. Apparently, the name of Alexander sufficed: in contrast to the use of epithets by his contemporaries, Alexander renounced epithets on most of his coinage.¹⁶⁵ His image was that of a young king and his name was Alexander.

¹⁶² *Chlamys*: SC 2253–6, which seems to be specific to Askalon; cf. Antiochos VI (SC 2026–7), Tryphon (SC 2047–8), and Antiochos VIII (SC 2339–41). The issue of Demetrios II from the same mint, if correctly attributed, lacks the *chlamys* (SC 2206).

¹⁶³ The elements of the bronze coinage can be found on his supposed relatives, but also other (and later) Seleukid kings. It is also very possible that the mints were responsible for the imagery on the bronze coinage in this period. Elephant scalp: Antiochos IV (SC 1533), Demetrios I (SC 1696), Alexander Zabinas (SC 2234). Radiate crown: after it was introduced by Antiochos IV, it was employed by Antiochos V (SC 1579), Demetrios I (SC 1697–8; 1703), Alexander Balas (SC 1786; 1789; 1854), and on most issues (apart from three) of Antiochos VI (e.g. SC 2000–18); Alexander Zabinas (SC 2233; 2235; 2237).

¹⁶⁴ Zeus Nikēphoros or attributes of Zeus: SC 2210; 2213–20; 2239; 2243–6; 2248. Other types: a distinction between local types (such as Sandan, Ba'al-Berit or the Phoenician eagle type) and royal types is hardly possible, again questioning whether these reverses are local or royal initiatives. The images include: Athena Nikēphoros (e.g. SC 2222), Nikē (e.g. SC 2224), Apollo (e.g. SC 2240–1), Dionysos (e.g. SC 2229), Tychē (SC 2232), *cornucopiae* (e.g. SC 2221; 2223), anchor (e.g. SC 2228), and others. For a stylistic analysis of the *cornucopiae*: Dahmen 2003.

¹⁶⁵ See ch. 3.1d.

Justin describes another element of Alexander Zabinas' quest for acknowledgement by the people of Antiocheia, which is more revealing than his coinage. When the silver coffin of the dead Antiochos VII arrived in the city, Alexander Zabinas cared for the body of the late king (Just. *Epit.* 39. 1. 6). If the event is historical, it is possible that it inspired Justin's genealogy of Alexander Zabinas' supposed adoption by Antiochos VII (*Epit.* 39. 1. 5). According to the narrative, Antiochos VII received great support (*magnum favorem*) by the people of Antiocheia (*Epit.* 39. 1. 6). By displaying his care for the dead monarch's body, Alexander Zabinas tried to associate himself with that former king, attempting in this way to attract former followers of Antiochos VII. Alexander was not the first individual for whom a corpse proved useful. Philip, the *syntrophos* of Antiochos IV, had escorted the body and the royal insignia of the Seleukid king to Antiocheia, and it seems that it was his specific role that allowed him to style himself as the executor of Antiochos IV's last wishes. In fact, it allowed Philip to establish himself in Antiocheia for a short period of time.¹⁶⁶ Alexander Zabinas' treatment of the corpse demonstrated his care for one of the dead kings (and Demetrios II's brother), and—according to the narrative—this proved helpful for his royal claims.

It is impossible to ascertain whether it was Alexander Zabinas' success or Demetrios II's failure that led to the latter's end, but after Demetrios II was murdered, the usurper was sole king in the Seleukid empire. He apparently had a good relationship with the people of Judaea (Jos. *Ant.* 13. 269), and the sources suggest that he had created a persuasive royal image that led to his general acceptance in large parts of the Levant and in Kilikia. We should place the break with Ptolemaic Egypt in this context. Justin describes how Alexander, now king, was flushed with pride over his success and began to show disdain for his maker Ptolemaios VIII Euergetes II. It was because of this that the latter began to support Antiochos VIII in order to destroy the kingdom of Alexander.¹⁶⁷ Yet while this is Justin's narrative, the break between Alexander Zabinas and Ptolemaios VIII

¹⁶⁶ Philip as guardian of Antiochos V: 1 Makk. 6. 14 and 55–6. The body of Antiochos IV: 2 Makk. 9. 29. Philip in Antiocheia: 1 Makk. 6. 63. For the body of Alexander the Great and its importance for Ptolemaios I: Diod. Sic. 18. 26–8; Strab. 17. 1. 8; Paus. 1. 6. 3; 1.7.1; Fraser 1972: IIa 31–3 n. 79.

¹⁶⁷ Just. *Epit.* 39. 2. 1–2: *Sed Alexander occupato Syriae regno, tumens successu rerum, spernere iam etiam ipsum Ptolomeum, a quo subornatus in regnum fuerat,*

Euergetes II presumably had little to do with Alexander Zabinas' behaviour towards the Ptolemaic king, if indeed they were still allied after Alexander went into the Levant. Rather, this episode could be read as a reaction to Alexander Zabinas' own success in establishing himself within the Seleukid empire, and it is this success which Justin (or the narrative's ultimate source) transforms into *insolentia*. The Ptolemaic king could not be interested in a strong Seleukid kingdom, and therefore he began to send assistance to the younger son of Demetrios II, Antiochos VIII.

This is the limited evidence for Alexander Zabinas' royal offers. It is possible that the Ptolemaic support for Antiochos VIII overwhelmed Alexander Zabinas' royal offers, as indicated by the loss of Antiocheia, by further reductions in his support base, and finally in his capture. Although the fall of Alexander Zabinas seems to have happened swiftly once Antiochos VIII received Ptolemaic support, his usurpation nevertheless underlines that even twenty years after the death of his 'father', a usurper thought it was advantageous to insert himself into the family of a man who had apparently been branded a usurper in the period after his death. Moreover, just like his pretended father who challenged a King Demetrios in 150, his name was also Alexander. He continued the Seleukid era and (if we credit the historical sources) he displayed care for the dead body of a former king. It was a combination of all these elements that led to his acceptance in the Levant. Apparently, however, he was too successful for Ptolemaios VIII Euergetes II to leave him to his own devices, and the Ptolemaic king began to support Antiochos VIII.

Despite the sparse evidence concerning Alexander Zabinas' relationship with his audiences in his kingdom, he is often depicted quite positively, underlining his success in gaining acceptance. Why was a usurper whom his enemies called זביןא 'the bought one', funded by Ptolemaic money, more successful than Demetrios II who was well established in his kingdom? Should this be put down to the contempt held for Demetrios II or perhaps to Ptolemaic support? How influential were the outside supporters of the Seleukid usurpers and did they have a vested interest in the affairs of the Seleukid kingdom? It is these questions that will be addressed in the following section, before considering the groups within the kingdom.

superba insolentia coepit. Itaque Ptolomeus reconciliata sororis gratia destruere Alexandri regnum, . . .

3.2f External Support of Royal Offers

In a summary section about the political events between c.168 and 150, Polybios underlines the importance of the outside kings in Seleukid politics: ‘But then, Seleukos’ son Demetrios, after he was king in Syria for twelve years, lost both his kingdom and his life, the other kings conspiring against him.’¹⁶⁸ For Polybios, Seleukid politics were not internal, but rather Mediterranean; the interwovenness of historical events was close to the Hellenistic author’s heart. This chapter has illustrated so far that neighbouring kings, and even the senate of Rome, took part in the affairs of the Seleukid kingdom. The degree or extent of their interest, however, requires discussion. For the Roman senate, the question is at the same time straightforward and complicated. It is straightforward in so far as Roman politics were the reason for the split in the dynasty, and if one can detect an interest of the Roman senate in the eastern Mediterranean in the second half of the second century, the senate was not interested in a strong Seleukid empire, and supported—in name only—power-holders to rival or at least test the integrity of the Seleukid state.¹⁶⁹ This general statement is, however, complicated not only by a period of forty years, but also by the fact that ‘the senate’ was not a unanimous body, but rather a group with differing opinions, making different political decisions. The latter question in particular, however, is not a question of the Seleukid state, but rather a question of Roman politics of the second century, and cannot be a topic of discussion here. So, while the usurpers of the second century thought it advantageous to have their kingship rubber-stamped by the Roman senate, strained relations or rejection by Rome, for example, do not seem to have systemically affected kingship within the Seleukid empire.¹⁷⁰

The position of the neighbouring kings also might be described as straightforward, but it was their proximity and the troops they supplied that could tilt the power dynamics of the kings in the Seleukid kingdom. Both the Attalids and the Ptolemies invested Seleukid pretenders and sent them into the Seleukid space. As

¹⁶⁸ Pol. 3. 5. 3: ὁ δὲ Σελεύκου Δημήτριος κύριος γενόμενος ἔτη δώδεκα τῆς ἐν Συρίᾳ βασιλείας ἅμα τοῦ βίου καὶ τῆς ἀρχῆς ἐστερήθη, συστραφέντων ἐπ’ αὐτὸν τῶν ἄλλων βασιλέων.

¹⁶⁹ Ehling 2008: 281–2; *contra* Gruen 1976.

¹⁷⁰ For a (necessarily) brief sketch, see Appendix D.

mentioned above, Alexander Balas allied himself with Ptolemaios VI and married his daughter after he had established himself as sole king. The advantages for the foreign kings seem obvious: Attalos II tried to distract Demetrios I from his activities north of the Euphrates by sending a pretender into Kilikia;¹⁷¹ Ptolemaios VI allied himself with Alexander Balas, presumably in order to avoid another Seleukid invasion of Egypt. He had only recently made peace with his brother, who was now reigning in Kyrene, and perhaps could not afford a war on the north-eastern frontier at this point.¹⁷² Ptolemaios VI also might have hoped to exert some influence over the young king Alexander. It was only a few years after his alliance with Alexander Balas that Ptolemaios VI successfully invaded the Levant as his predecessor had, and it was only his death that diminished Ptolemaic power over the Seleukid territories when Demetrios II quickly drove the Ptolemaic troops back into Egypt.¹⁷³ During the later period there are no indications that Ptolemaios VIII Euergetes II tried to intervene in the politics of the Seleukid kingdom after his accession to the diadem. The king exiled close friends of his late brother and he consolidated his position in Egypt.¹⁷⁴ Moreover, Antiochos VII also does not seem to have been interested in a campaign against his southern neighbour. It was only when Demetrios II returned from his Parthian captivity that the Seleukid king began a campaign against Egypt, which had fallen into civil war. Presumably to distract Demetrios II from the political troubles of his own kingdom, Ptolemaios VIII Euergetes II invested a pretender to the Seleukid diadem.¹⁷⁵ While these initial objectives of royal support might seem obvious, the continued relationship between Seleukid usurpers and outside kings is difficult to establish.

Ptolemaic politics are instructive. The Ptolemaic king gave his daughter Kleopatra Thea in marriage to Alexander Balas after the

¹⁷¹ Demetrios I unsuccessfully offered his sister as a bride to Ariarathes V of Kappadokia: Diod. Sic. 31. 28; cf. Hopp 1977: 39–40.

¹⁷² For the competition between Ptolemaios VI and Ptolemaios VIII: Huß 2001: 567–89. It seems that the formula in the demotic texts implies that the son and co-regent of Ptolemaios VI had died before August 152: see Huß 2001: 577 n. 317 and 578 n. 318.

¹⁷³ See ch. 3.1b.

¹⁷⁴ See Huß 2001: 596–608 and Hölbl 2001: 194–7. For the exile of Galaistes, the *philos* of Ptolemaios VI: Diod. Sic. 33. 20. For the king's communication with the troops: SB VIII 10011 (SEG 12. 548); Huß 2001: 601; Nadig 2007: 80–90.

¹⁷⁵ See ch. 3.1d.

latter's victory against Demetrios I. Nevertheless, five years later Ptolemaios VI invaded the Levant and joined sides with Demetrios II. This behaviour is remarkably similar to our account of Alexander Zabinas. Styled as a successor of a Seleukid king, he was sent into the Levant to weaken the authority of Demetrios II. After the death of Demetrios II, however, the Ptolemaic king began to support Antiochos VIII in order to weaken his former ally. The literary accounts display the breakdown in communication between the Ptolemaic king, and both Alexander Balas and Alexander Zabinas. Josephus (perhaps basing his narrative on Nikolaos of Damascus) describes a plot by Alexander Balas against Ptolemaios VI in his account of what motivated the Ptolemaic king's change in attitude towards his former ally (Jos. *Ant.* 13. 106–10). Justin, on the other hand, gives Alexander Zabinas' display of ingratitude towards Ptolemaios VIII Euergetes II as the reason for the Ptolemaic king's change of allegiance (Just. *Epit.* 39. 2. 1). As argued previously in this chapter, however, the reason for the Ptolemaic kings' change in allegiance was presumably not hurt feelings, but their allies' successes.¹⁷⁶ Thus, even if the Ptolemaic king was allied with the Seleukid usurpers, this relationship became highly unstable as soon as they were the sole kings in the Levant. Moreover, the Ptolemaic kings joined new kings to defeat their former allies, suggesting that the Ptolemaic kings were interested in a Seleukid kingdom that was divided by internal strife. Their alliances with Demetrios II and Antiochos VIII illustrate that the growing strength of Alexander Balas and the vitality of Alexander Zabinas were not in the Ptolemaic kings' interest.

Although the Attalids might have been interested in a stronger relationship with the king they sent into the Levant (as illustrated in the public friendship between Eumenes II and Antiochos IV),¹⁷⁷ there is little evidence on which to base conclusions regarding the relationship between Attalos II and Alexander Balas. Although the lack of evidence might be accidental, it seems plausible to assume that the initial distraction within the Seleukid kingdom was reason enough for the Attalids to invest in a Seleukid pretender, and it was not certain how this relationship would develop. The Attalid kings might have been content with the victory of their pretender

¹⁷⁶ See chs 3.2d and 3.2e.

¹⁷⁷ Mittag 2006: 103–14 argues that their friendship is evident in examples of benefactions, but does not discuss the potential rivalry in this euergetic *agōn*.

Alexander Balas, but it is questionable if his marriage to Kleopatra Thea was perceived positively in Pergamon. There is no evidence that Attalos II was involved in the appearance of Demetrios II in Kilikia; however, it is nevertheless possible that a new pretender to Seleukid Syria was welcomed by the kings of Pergamon.

Attalid interest in Seleukid Syria from Alexander Balas' period does not seem to have outlasted the initial investiture of the king. Nevertheless, the sending of Alexander Balas indicates an interest in a kingdom that was preoccupied with its own affairs. The Ptolemaic support of Alexander Balas, Demetrios II (or in this instance perhaps only nominal support for a *de facto* conquest), Alexander Zabinas, and Antiochos VIII illustrates that the Ptolemaic kings accepted a single ruler as long as he was not too successful. The acclamation of Antiochos VI and the usurpation of Tryphon perpetuated the duality of power within the Seleukid kingdom without outside influence. No communication between the Ptolemaic or Attalid kings and either Antiochos VI or Tryphon is attested. While this is surely partially due to the lack of available sources for this period, it also is possible that both monarchs were content to stand back from the civil war in the Seleukid kingdom in this period. The Attalid kingdom does not appear to have engaged in further politics with the Seleukid kingdom, and the arrival of Antiochos VII on the coast of the Levant cannot be connected with outside monarchs.¹⁷⁸ Polybios, quoted above, captures these politics (Pol. 3. 5. 3): both the Attalid and the Ptolemaic kings were interested in the fall of Demetrios I, multiplying the pressures on the central government.

3.2g The Royal Offers: A Summary

Both Timarchos and Tryphon revolted following the accession of a new king, and their prospects might have been limited under these new rulers. While Timarchos had the advantage of usurping the diadem in the periphery, Tryphon began his revolt to restore the rule of the former king Alexander Balas: the promotion of the young

¹⁷⁸ During the last years of Attalos II and the early years of Attalos III, the evidence places no emphasis on their south-eastern borders: Hopp 1977: 98–102; 107–12; Hansen 1971: 140–4. Ptolemaios VIII Euergetes II was also strikingly passive in the Seleukid sphere. It is debatable whether the revolt of Galaistes did not allow for any other political activities: Diod. Sic. 33. 22; see Huß 2001: 606–8.

Antiochos VI was the signifier, and it was presumably the combination of the boy and his own position that allowed Tryphon to gather troops who had served under the former king. Timarchos referred to local deities on his coinage. On his tetradrachms, however, he differed greatly from the common Seleukid formulae, and placed a strong emphasis on military elements. Moreover, his royal image is chiefly illustrated in his choice of the royal title of 'Great King'. Tryphon is the only king for whom one can attest a break with the Seleukid era. This break from previous kings is further underlined in his choice of his epithet *autokratōr*. In his imagery Tryphon stressed both military and luxurious elements, thus associating himself with Alexander the Great (as developed, for example, by Pyrrhos).¹⁷⁹ On their coinage these kings promised their audiences not only that they would be militarily successful, but also that they represented a kingship which differed from that of their Seleukid contemporaries.

Alexander Balas and Alexander Zabinas, on the other hand, associated themselves with past Seleukid kings. They continued the Seleukid eras on their coinage, and placed emphasis on iconographical continuity with regard to their supposed fathers. Nevertheless, the image of Alexander Balas in particular not only stressed a connection with Alexander the Great, it also continued and amplified Antiochos IV and Demetrios I's references to the Macedonian king, and thus created a new individual royal iconography. While elements from Seleukid iconography are present, the royal portrait is strikingly muscular and stresses the individuality of the king. This is amplified by the royal name of Alexander: it was the prowess of the king, transmitted on the coinage, that promised the troops military victories and stability.

So far, this chapter has illustrated that all usurpers made distinct offers of kingship to the groups in the Seleukid empire, and it has been argued that this is not different from the usurpers of the third century. Antiochos Hierax and Achaïos also received some form of Ptolemaic support, and were able to make alliances with the kings in northern Asia Minor. Both Achaïos and Molon offered distinct royal images, constructed out of political action and royal iconography, which they thought would underline their claims to the diadem. They needed to persuade their troops that they were excellent military

¹⁷⁹ On luxurious weaponry, see e.g. Plut. *Alex.* 32. 8–11; *Pyrrh.* 16. 11. See also ch. 3.2b.

leaders, and they needed to persuade the cities that they were not plundering warlords. Yet their claim for kingship took place in the absence of the king. The groups in their kingdoms, such as Seleukeia on the Tigris or Aspendos in Pamphylia, could accept them or resist, but could not choose between different kings. For the second-century Levant, however, the evidence suggests a very different picture.

3.3 THE RECEPTION OF ROYAL OFFERS: WHEN AUDIENCES BECOME AGENTS

3.3a Choice: The Politicization of Audiences

The political landscape of the Seleukid kingdom from the mid-second century onwards was witness not only to an inner-Judaeian stasis in Jerusalem, but also to the usurpations of Alexander Balas, Tryphon, and Alexander Zabinas in the direct vicinity of the Seleukid king. It was this political climate that created a 'market situation' in the communication between the contenders for monarchical authority and their audiences in the kingdom. The behaviour of the people of Judaea, the citizens of Antiocheia, and others illustrate how the audiences became politicized agents, choosing freely (at least in part) which contenders' royal offers were acceptable, authoritative, and kingly, and which were condemnable, void, and tyrannical. Although this politicization of audiences in the Seleukid kingdom gave usurpers the opportunity to establish and present themselves as the more attractive and persuasive alternative, the presence of more than one centre of power weakened in general the central authority of the king in his kingdom. The real winners were the politicized entities, such as the leading groups of Judaea, Arab chieftains, and cities such as Antiocheia on the Orontes, Sidon, and Tyre.¹⁸⁰ It is this political situation that clearly illustrates the limits of Hellenistic kingship: kings were only kings as long as they were accepted. By disregarding dynastic ties, acceptance was based entirely on approval from different politicized agents in the kingdom. Of course, authority could be enforced, and one could suggest that there was little a city

¹⁸⁰ For a practical assessment of cities' powers in this period: e.g. Ma 2000a. On local elites and their interests: Dreyer and Mittag 2011.

could do but to accept a new ruler when under attack. Nevertheless, the appearance of two contenders for the diadem clearly demonstrates the limits of authority through violence and dynastic links. The political climate of the second-century Levant may allow us to draw much firmer conclusions about Hellenistic kingship and the Seleukid kingdom in general; for now, however, this analysis is about the reception of communicational offers and the reception of usurpers.

3.3b The Makkabees and Judaea

The interaction between the Makkabaeen faction of Judaea and the Seleukid kings and usurpers is the best-attested case of an audience transformed into political agents.¹⁸¹ J. Ma has compellingly argued that the communicational efforts of both Seleukid kings and usurpers should not be interpreted as statements of power, but rather as pleas for acknowledgement couched in the usual imperial Seleukid language.¹⁸² The reasons for these royal appeals are obvious. Since the beginning of the revolt of the Makkabees under Antiochos IV, the people of Judaea had become a powerful political factor in the southern Levant, and not only controlled certain cities, but also maintained a large force which could support usurpers as well as kings. Strikingly, the Makkabees' success in becoming the primary faction in Jerusalem seems to have occurred in the period between the death of Alkimos and the arrival of Alexander Balas.¹⁸³ It was then that the group around Jonathan was acknowledged as a diplomatic power, as the peace treaty with Bakchides in 158 should indicate (1 Makk. 9. 57–72; Jos. *Ant.* 13. 32–3). Although the Makkabaeen narratives mention them only marginally, other groups existed within Jerusalem. One of them was in control of the *akra* of Jerusalem, and had initially hoped to gain a more stable control of the city through the adaptation of Greek cultural elements.¹⁸⁴ Despite their presence, and a Seleukid garrison notwithstanding, the Seleukid kings under Demetrios I began diplomatic relations with the Makkabees, and with

¹⁸¹ Bibliography on the Makkabees is endless, see e.g. Honigman 2014: 297–404; Regev 2013; still, naturally, Bickerman 1937.

¹⁸² Ma 2000b: 85–109; cf. Kuhrt and Sherwin-White 1993: 228.

¹⁸³ 1 Makk. 9. 73; Schürer 1973: 176–7. Wilker 2011 downplays the Makkabaeen position at the outset of the revolt.

¹⁸⁴ On the term 'Hellenizers', see ch. 3.1b, n. 30.

reduced external support, the other factions could not strengthen their own claims of acceptance.

Thus, the Makkabees had established themselves as one of the major powers in the competition between the Seleukid kings and usurpers. Following the landing of Alexander Balas and his acknowledgement of Jonathan as the leader of the people of Judaea, they managed to establish themselves in the centre of Jerusalem and Judaea.¹⁸⁵ In return, the Makkabees accepted either usurpers or dynastic kings as kings, and concluded alliances with them. This allowed both the Seleukid king and usurper to engage their opponent with the support of the Makkabaeen troops or at the very least to avoid an alliance between his opponent and the people of Judaea.

While in theory the 'market situation' of royal acknowledgement places stress on the pure availability of an alternative ruler (in terms of 'the enemy of my enemy is my friend'), in practice it seems that the Makkabees preferred to support usurpers. While the available evidence is too limited to draw firm conclusions, a pattern is visible. The Judaeen defection from Demetrios I should not be surprising: Alexander Balas needed to offer more concessions in order to establish himself in the area, and so he was the more attractive candidate. In the later period, however, it seems that the Makkabees did not defect from Alexander Balas to Demetrios I or Demetrios II, and they only rallied to the latter when he was the only ruler in the area, leaving them little choice (1 Makk. 11. 24; Jos. *Ant.* 13. 124). Their continuing alliance with Alexander Balas in the early phase of the conflict with Demetrios II might have been accidental, but if it was not, then the Makkabees practically halted the politics of competition, either until the Ptolemaic invasion, or even until Alexander Balas' death.¹⁸⁶ Later in the period, after Jonathan had supported Demetrios II in his conflict in Antiocheia (1 Makk. 11. 43–8; Jos. *Ant.* 13. 135–9), the Makkabees turned to Antiochos VI, the son of Alexander Balas. The break between Tryphon and Jonathan falls in the period after

¹⁸⁵ See ch. 3.1b. For possible resistance by other Jewish groups: see e.g. the community of Qumran: Wilker 2011: 239–40; Chrubasik forthcoming b.

¹⁸⁶ It is difficult to know how to read the meeting between Jonathan and Ptolemaios VI (1 Makk. 11. 6–7; Jos. *Ant.* 13. 104–5), but unless Ptolemaios VI was still understood to be an ally of Alexander Balas, Jonathan seems to have established a relationship with the new power in the Levant.

the death of Antiochos VI. While one might argue that the Makkabees did not acknowledge Tryphon's kingship (and this is what 1 Makk. and Josephus seem to suggest), the rejection of Tryphon and the renewed alliance with Demetrios II that followed this event, should instead most likely be connected to the capture and murder of Jonathan.¹⁸⁷

What can we make of all this? The immediate picture is as follows: if the Makkabees supported usurpers, this would keep kings and usurpers preoccupied with each other, thus allowing the Makkabees to extend their own political influence. However, their continuing support of Alexander Balas demonstrates that the picture is not quite so straightforward. The Makkabees did not necessarily support incoming claimants to the diadem, as in the case of Demetrios II. Moreover, further concessions were not their only interest since we have at least one occasion when grants from Demetrios I were refused (1 Makk. 10. 25–45; *Jos. Ant.* 13. 47–57).¹⁸⁸

Makkabaeen acceptance of Alexander Balas, and Antiochos VII in particular, is critical for understanding the acknowledgement of political agents in this period. What was so persuasive about Alexander Balas' offers? According to Josephus' phrasing, the high priesthood had been vacant for quite some time before Alexander Balas granted the office to Jonathan (*Jos. Ant.* 20. 237).¹⁸⁹ It is instructive not only that the Makkabees accepted Alexander Balas' offer, but also that they apparently did not attempt to take (or rather succeed in taking) the priesthood themselves during its vacancy. If there had been an opportunity, the author of 1 Makkabees would certainly have preferred this version in his account rather than its bestowal by an outside king. Apparently, however, this was not a viable option. Moreover, Jonathan was first honoured as Alexander Balas' 'Friend' (1 Makk. 10. 20; *Jos. Ant.* 13. 45) and later as his 'first Friend' (1 Makk. 10. 65; *Jos. Ant.* 13. 85). Jonathan travelled to the wedding of Alexander Balas to receive honours for achievements that could not only be in the interest of the king. The acceptance of the high priesthood, the travels of Jonathan to Demetrios II, and the alliance

¹⁸⁷ See ch. 3.1c; see also Ma 2000b: 101–2.

¹⁸⁸ Whether the letter in 1 Makk. was authentic or not is in the end not decisive. For the discussion: Schürer 1973: 178 n. 14; see also Eilers 2008; Ben Zeev 1998: 357–73.

¹⁸⁹ On the vacancy, see ch. 3.2d.

between Simon and Demetrios II illustrate that the Makkabees were still very much interested in receiving confirmation of their position by the kings in the Levant.

The Makkabees accepted more and more concessions from the Seleukids, and of course the Seleukids would not have been able to deny a large number of them.¹⁹⁰ Nevertheless, as much as the Seleukid kings and usurpers were eager to incorporate the Makkabees within a Seleukid framework of communication, the Makkabees still thought it was necessary, or at least plausible, to act within this context. And this is where the friendship with Alexander Balas fits into the political world of second-century Jerusalem: the power of the Makkabees was not so strong as to resist entirely the Seleukid discourse of power. Even in this period, the Makkabees needed nominal acknowledgement by the Seleukid king in order to surpass the opposing groups in Jerusalem.¹⁹¹ There is limited evidence regarding these other groups, but references to the 'Hellenizers' or the bestowal of the high priesthood (in contrast to a narrative of the Makkabaeen acquisition of the priesthood) are indicative of these dynamics. A last example will illustrate this.

Antiochos VII was the last king to reassert some control over Judaea.¹⁹² According to Josephus, it was the king's piety towards the Jews that made the people of Judaea accept his peace (*Ant.* 13. 245).¹⁹³ Yet it seems obvious that it was the weakness of the Makkabees that placed the Seleukid king in the stronger position.¹⁹⁴ Presumably in 135, in the eighth year of his reign, Simon, the high priest of Jerusalem, was murdered by his son-in-law Ptolemaios (*Jos. Ant.* 13. 228). Simon's son, Hyrkanos, as well as his son-in-law, Ptolemaios, fought against each other, and while Hyrkanos was able to gain the upper hand in the struggle, Ptolemaios was still alive and resided roughly fifty kilometres east beyond the river Jordan with a local dynast (*Jos. Ant.* 13. 229–35).¹⁹⁵

¹⁹⁰ Ma 2000b: 102–3.

¹⁹¹ Bickerman 1937: 136–8 underlines this competitive aspect. On the Tobiads: Pfeiffer 2011 for an overview; Larché 2005; Larché and Will 1991. On other groups: Wilker 2011. On the general scenario: Chrubasik forthcoming b.

¹⁹² Just. *Epit.* 36. 1. 10; Fischer 1970: 88–9; Fischer 1991: 38; Habicht 1989b: 370.

¹⁹³ For Antiochos III's care for local customs: *Jos. Ant.* 12. 138–45; Bickerman 1980; Ma 2000b: 86–9; see also Honigman 2014: 302–10.

¹⁹⁴ See also Ehling 2008: 196–8.

¹⁹⁵ We do not have to associate this dynast with the successors of the Tobiad dynasts at 'Iraq al Amir, but the earlier Tobiads can be seen as one example of surely many local groups: cf. n. 191.

At this point Antiochos VII and Hyrkanos were dependent upon each other. Ptolemaios' capture of the fortress of Dogan above Jericho and the murder of Simon's wife and two sons illustrates that Ptolemaios was able to raise and engage troops that opposed the house of the Makkabees. Most importantly, it demonstrates that the people of Judaea were not as united as our Hasmonean narratives suggest. The faction of the Hellenizers had long since lost its power, yet the leading position of the Makkabees was not always uncontested (e.g. *Jos. Ant.* 13. 288). While Hyrkanos could have joined sides with an upcoming pretender in order to free himself from tribute or gain more advantages that could have stabilized his position in Jerusalem, Antiochos VII could have tried to reassert Ptolemaios' position and endanger the position of the high priest in Jerusalem. Thus, for the first time since the group in the *akra* of Jerusalem was abandoned by the Seleukid kings, Antiochos VII had found a means to establish a stable and somewhat reciprocal relationship with the Makkabaeen faction, with each party firmly dependent on the other's acknowledgement of its right to rule.¹⁹⁶ While there is no evidence to suggest a connection between the Seleukid king and the engagements within Judaea during this period, the internal strife was presumably very welcome.

The picture we obtain from Antiochos VII's relationship with Hyrkanos is a clear illustration that the Makkabees, even after the 'declaration of independence' under Simon, were not unchallenged. Makkabaeen power politics from c.150 onwards are remarkably similar. While the author of 1 Makkabees and Josephus downplay the importance of other factions, these groups are nevertheless apparent in the narrative. No matter what degree of power we attribute to the strength of the other groups in Jerusalem, Tryphon's capture of Jonathan presumably should be interpreted with this in mind. It was the taking of Jonathan and Tryphon's attempt to march on Jerusalem that was intended to break Makkabaeen superiority in the politics of Jerusalem. Tryphon may have wanted to strengthen one of the other Judean groups, which is possibly evident in Josephus'

¹⁹⁶ The late appeal of 'the ethnos' of the Judaeans to Demetrios III in perhaps 88 to invade (*Jos. Ant.* 13. 376 and 4QpNah fr. 3–4 coll. 1. 2–3) can serve as an indicator that also long after Antiochos VII's rule the Hasmonean rulers were not as stable as they hoped to convey: see Dąbrowa 2010.

discussion of Tryphon with those ἐν τῇ ἄκρῃ, in the *akra* (Jos. *Ant.* 13. 208). These events underline the multi-factional politics in Jerusalem in this period. The Makkabees were not only interested in a usurper in the Seleukid kingdom in order to extend their own influence, they also needed to make sure that the kings in the Levant would not support other Judaeans groups. Ptolemaios, who had murdered Simon, is one example of potential opposition. The Makkabaeans position was not as strong as suggested by both 1 Makkabees and Josephus, and thus the Makkabees continued to seek the support of other kings.

While this discussion is important for the Makkabaeans position within Jerusalem, this behaviour also illustrates this particular group of the Judaeans elite's perception of central power: for the Makkabees there was no qualitative difference between the Seleukid kings and the Seleukid usurpers. Usurpers might have been more willing to make concessions, but at the same time, these concessions were not always accepted. The alliances between the people of Judaea and the king in question were dependent on constant renegotiations and affirmations. They offered each other mutual acknowledgement and acceptance. In relation to other Jewish groups, external powers, and also their own supporters, the Makkabees wanted to appear as the monolithic faction that spoke for the people of Judaea. The kings in the Levant wanted to be the only rulers in the region, and for these reasons both groups were dependent on each other.

3.3c Cities: Antiocheia, Sidon, and Tyre

In the second century, Antiocheia on the Orontes had become *the* capital of the Seleukid empire. However, Antiocheia was not the only major city in the area, but constituted one part of the tetrapolis of Syria alongside Apameia, the home of the royal stud; Laodikeia, the harbour of the royal fleet; and Seleukeia in Pieria.¹⁹⁷ Outside the tetrapolis, Ptolemais also became an important city in the latter part of this period. The presence of these other Seleukid cities must be considered when interpreting the literary source material. Judaeans

¹⁹⁷ On the tetrapolis of Syria: Capdetrey 2007: 359–62. For the Seleukid 'space' of northern Syria: now Kosmin 2014: 103–12. While RC 71 makes reference to *patrida*, I cannot follow Kosmin 2014: 111 who sees here a reference to northern Syria as a self-described homeland.

historiography, for example, constructs to a large degree a 'tale of two cities', by contrasting Jerusalem with Antiocheia, and thus amplifies the role of these two cities. In both 1 Makkabees and Josephus, Antiocheia features as the embodiment of Seleukid stateliness and a signifier for the Seleukid kingdom. In Judaeian terms, Antiocheia was the home of the Seleukid kings, as Jerusalem was the home of the Makkabees. Nevertheless, the prominence of Antiocheia among these cities also is attested in additional evidence. Philip, the former chancellor of Antiochos IV, apparently took Antiocheia when he brought the corpse and signet ring of Antiochos IV back to the Levant (Jos. *Ant.* 12. 386; 2 Makk. 13. 23). The importance of Antiocheia is likewise illustrated in the vast silver output of the mint located in the city. Clearly, Antiocheia was a very important city in the Seleukid Levant. It was the capital of the Seleukid empire, home of the palace of Demetrios II and the kings before him (as illustrated in the citizens' revolt against Demetrios II), and was one of the homes of the Seleukid close friends and courtiers. Given this connection to the Seleukid kings, the taking of the city must have made an impact on the perception of usurpers' success or failure.

Moreover, as outlined in the previous discussion on the Makkabees, the city was not just a passive audience in the political turmoil of the second century, as the city also became politicized. Regardless of how we imagine Antiocheia's second-century government, we must imagine the city as a diverse political body, with different factions of local groups who hoped that supporting a different ruler would be beneficial to their claims of power. One prime example of Antiochene (even if not civic) agents is the defection of the commanders Diodotos and Hierax, who handed the city to Ptolemaios VI. Even if the narrative might be dramatized, the scenario is clear: the 'city' defected from Alexander Balas, his chancellor was murdered while escaping in women's clothing (Jos. *Ant.* 13. 108), and the commanders of the city offered the diadem to Ptolemaios VI.¹⁹⁸ In this case, the commanders of Antiocheia judged that the chances of success for their king Alexander Balas were slim, and thus chose to change their allegiance: the presence of a Ptolemaic army in front of their gates also might have influenced their decision. However, in this account we have no extensive evidence for those who still sided with Alexander

¹⁹⁸ See ch. 3.1b.

Balas (those around Ammonios) and were not murdered, and a lack of evidence for this episode is an indicator of the period in general, where the individual organs of the Antiocheia remain elusive.¹⁹⁹ While the complex processes of decision-making for any given city are important to keep in mind, the absence of evidence nevertheless requires us to treat them in most instances as one body.

Justin provides the most extensive account of a usurper's relationship with the city of Antiocheia on the Orontes in his account of Alexander Zabinas. In the episode concerning the silver casket of Antiochos VII (*Epit.* 39. 1. 6), Alexander Zabinas illustrated that he knew how to display himself towards the people of Antiocheia, and his care and kingly treatment of a royal predecessor apparently led to him being accepted by the people of the city. This account is corroborated by Diodoros' portrayal of the ruler. At some point during Alexander Zabinas' reign, three 'noteworthy commanders' (ἀξιόλογοι ἡγούμενες) defected and took the city of Laodikeia. Alexander took the city and pardoned the commanders. Diodoros adds that 'he was kindly and of a forgiving nature, and moreover he was gentle in speech and in manners, wherefore he was deeply loved by the people' (Diod. Sic. 34/5. 22). Alexander Zabinas responded to defection with forgiveness and kindness, and was praised for it. This is reminiscent of the portrayal of Antiochos III after the taking of Seleukeia on the Tigris, as Diodoros and Justin also portray Alexander Zabinas as a generous and good king, accepted by the people of Antiocheia on the Orontes.²⁰⁰

Other kings also attempted to court the people of Antiocheia on the Orontes, and it is in this context that we should place ancient authors' comments and criticisms on the luxuriousness of the Seleukid rulers. The *pompē* of Antiochos IV, with its enormous banquets (Pol. 30. 25. 1–26. 3), and the banquets of Antiochos VII emphasized not only the Seleukid kings' wealth, but also their care for the people of Antiocheia.²⁰¹ The depiction of the Seleukid kings' luxuries was a

¹⁹⁹ For the dynamics of an inner city discourse in other cities: Gray 2015; for the earlier period: Gehrke 1985. For one example of inner city dynamics, see the change-over of the city of Xanthos from Ptolemaic to Seleukid rule, and the role of the former Ptolemaic courtier Tlepolemos: Ma 2002: 236–7; Robert and Robert 1983: 168–71. D. Engels 2014b raises the question of the elites of the tetrapolis.

²⁰⁰ For the forgiving king, see ch. 4.2.

²⁰¹ See also Heliodoros *FGrHist* 373 F8. For Antiochos VII: Poseidonios *FGrHist* 87 F9a and b (EK F61a and b); see also F11 (EK F63) on the drunkenness of Antiochos VII.

form of accepted communication with the audiences of the northern Levant, and it is presumably this form of communication that finds its way into the critical remarks of Poseidonios, who passes negative judgement not only on the Seleukid kings, but also on the luxury of the people living in these cities (Poseidonios *FGrHist* 87 F 10 [EK F62a and b]).

Justin's account of Alexander Zabinas illustrates not only his acceptance, but also the limits of his relationship with Antiocheia. After a military defeat by Antiochos VIII, Alexander Zabinas retreated to his capital city.²⁰² According to Justin, Alexander Zabinas removed a golden, presumably votive, statue of Nikē from the temple of Zeus in order to pay his troops. In a second attempt to obtain the statue of Zeus, however, the people of Antiocheia forced him to flee the city (Just. *Epit.* 39. 2. 5–6). While we cannot use this story to determine whether the removal of the cult statue in contrast to a dedicatory statue was a cause of outrage for the people of Antiocheia, it is striking that it is the sacrilege and not Alexander's lineage that led to Alexander's fall. While Diodoros' account is confused, his overall judgement is still important. It aptly displays the dynamics of Alexander's end, and is thus worth quoting: 'Alexander did not trust the people because of their inexperience of the hazards of war and their readiness for any change.'²⁰³ Change was an important element of the city's political action.

As the coinage indicates, Antiocheia had been under control of Alexander Zabinas (e.g. SC 2215–20); he was accepted in the city as king and was (following Diod. Sic. 34/5. 22) loved by the people. Nevertheless, after Alexander had been defeated in battle, he no longer trusted the very same people, as he knew they were ready for political change. This situation is strikingly similar to Molon's distrust of the people of Babylonia and the Susiane (Pol. 5. 52. 4). Given Alexander's acceptance in Antiocheia and Diodoros' general narrative, the changing opinion of the people was not connected to Alexander Zabinas' descent. Instead, it displayed Antiocheia's reaction to Alexander Zabinas' royal offers. After he had been defeated by Antiochos VIII

Antiochos VIII bestowed lavish gifts during the festivals at Daphne: Poseidonios *FGrHist* 87 F21a and b (EK F72a and b).

²⁰² Jos. *Ant.* 13. 269; Just. *Epit.* 39. 2. 5; Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F32. 23.

²⁰³ Diod. Sic. 34/5. 28. 1: Ἀλέξανδρος οὐ πιστεύων τοῖς ὄχλοις διὰ τε τὴν ἀπειρίαν τῶν ἐν τῷ πολέμῳ κινδύνων καὶ τὴν πρὸς τὰς μεταβολὰς ὀξύτητα παρατάσασθαι.

(who perhaps was supported by Ptolemaic troops), Alexander thought it was necessary to seize the temple treasures in order to prepare his defence. The most striking element is not that Alexander Zabinas committed a sacrilege, but rather that he thought it was possible to remove the treasures from the temple (even if driven by political necessity). The people of Antiocheia no longer followed this king, thus defecting from Alexander Zabinas and driving him out of the city. An important question that cannot be resolved is whether the plundering of temple treasure was a reason for the secession of the cities (and then Zabinas' actions must have ignored this possibility), or whether—instead—the temple treasures were offered as a loan, and this loan was later (either by the city or by later authors) reconstructed as a story of a defeated and desperate king. Regardless, it is very likely that it was the previous defeat of Alexander Zabinas and the approaching troops of Antiochos VIII that had decided Antiocheia's relationship with the usurper, at a time when Alexander Zabinas' royal offers were no longer persuasive.

Antiocheia was able to choose its king. Both Alexander Balas and Alexander Zabinas were no longer supported after a certain point, and Antiocheia revolted after Demetrios II had taken over the city and punished collaborators of the previous regime. According to Judaeon historiography, Demetrios II had to call on Jonathan to send Judaeon troops to quieten the people of Antiocheia. Although Tryphon took the city in the name of Antiochos VI soon afterwards, it is unclear how long the city stayed directly under Tryphon's control. The city defected from Demetrios II when he went on his Egyptian expedition in the 120s, and it accepted Alexander Zabinas relatively early in his campaign. Since the changeover of Antiocheia is largely attested by the coinage, it cannot be ascertained if it was the result of political pressures, or (as illustrated in the few examples above) voluntary changes in allegiance. Yet beyond these possibilities, the frequency of change is ultimately striking and decisive. Antiocheia stands alongside other communities and groups in the Levant, whose interest in its own decision-making became more and more visible in this period, demonstrating that—in the right circumstances—it was the city that could choose its king.

The behaviour of Antiocheia also can be corroborated with evidence from other cities in the Levant from the 140s onwards, even if the results are necessarily tentative. During the usurpations of Antiochos VI and Tryphon, the cities of Sidon and Tyre continued to mint

coinage for Demetrios II until 140/39, while Ptolemais and Byblos began to mint coinage for Antiochos VI in 144/3 and 142/1.²⁰⁴ The opening of a new mint illustrates a relationship with the royal centre under whose name it struck coinage, and a ceased relationship with the previous king. The motivations of these mints and cities would be revealing for our understanding of the dynamics of the second-century Levant, whether they did so because of the occupation of the city or if the city decided (similarly to the people of Judea) that it might be advantageous for them to join sides with the new king (cf. *Jos. Ant.* 13. 123–5). With our limited evidence, these motivations remain undetected, yet the changeover of cities necessitated a relationship between city (or mint) and king.

As suggested previously, the allegiance of cities that continued to strike coinage for Demetrios II is less clear.²⁰⁵ The initial assumption that Demetrios II controlled the city with an established mint is complicated by irregularities in the evidence. Although Gaza had defected from Demetrios II in 142/1, and was in a friendly alliance with Jonathan and the Makkabees (*Jos. Ant.* 13. 152), the city nevertheless struck quasi-municipal coins in the name of Demetrios II (SC 1974–6). It is doubtful that minting in the name of Demetrios II in the years 142/1 should reflect the renewed alliance between Simon and Demetrios II.²⁰⁶ Rather, the city struck local coinage for local consumption. The portrait of Demetrios II was possibly maintained to guarantee monetary acceptability. If this was the case, this does not allow for secure conclusions regarding alliances with the Seleukid king.²⁰⁷ One could further speculate that the portrait also was used as a marker against Antiochos VI and Tryphon.

It is possible that we see similar dynamics in Sidon and Tyre. According to the literary evidence, the relationship between the Seleukid kings and Sidon and Tyre seems initially incompatible with the coinage. Although the cities continuously minted coinage in the name of Demetrios II and Antiochos VII, the literary evidence suggests these cities were not landing points for the wandering

²⁰⁴ Antiochos VI: Byblos: SC 2020. Askalon: SC 2026–7. Ptolemais: SC 2023–5. Demetrios II: Berytos: SC 1952. Sidon: SC 1953–7. Tyre: SC 1958–71.

²⁰⁵ See ch. 3.2c.

²⁰⁶ Suggested by Hoover 2007: 66–8; see also Hoover 2004.

²⁰⁷ See a similar example for Askalon in the later period: Meadows 2001: 57.

Antiochos VII.²⁰⁸ This in itself might not be necessarily meaningful, however, if any stress can be placed on our literary evidence, Demetrios II himself was murdered by the commander of Tyre, the city that minted coinage in his name (Jos. *Ant.* 13. 268; Just. *Epit.* 39. 1. 8). In Tyre in particular, the coinage under Demetrios II had a largely municipal character, bearing the terms *ιερά*, sacred, and *ἄσυλος*, inviolable, and some also displayed the name of the city, Tyre. This theme is continued under Antiochos VII when the coinages of Sidon and Tyre also displayed the names of the city in both Phoenician and Greek.²⁰⁹ While conclusive answers regarding the status and loyalties of the cities cannot be given, it is at least worth consideration whether Sidon and Tyre continued to be Seleukid cities during the reign of Demetrios II. This is perhaps corroborated by the differences in the portraiture between the Seleukid coinage in the Phoenician cities and other Seleukid mints as outlined by P. F. Mittag.²¹⁰ The image of the Seleukid king was retained for monetary credibility, perhaps even to make a political statement against a different king.

If, however, the coinage does not necessarily provide conclusions with regard to the king who held any given city, it is possible that the cities were independent actors. Thus, what can we make of this? While the coinage would initially suggest that it is at least possible that Sidon and Tyre were loyal cities of Demetrios II, the literary evidence suggests the contrary, and perhaps a different political picture can be obtained through an appreciation of these conflicting accounts. The cities consciously defected from one king after they accepted statuses and grants in the same manner as the Makkabees did. Moreover, the coinage of these two cities illustrates that both cities consciously decided not to ally themselves with Antiochos VI or Tryphon. They insisted on their independence, and preserved it as long as they could.

The communities in the Levant actively tried to be independent, and we also should presumably place Strabo's note on Arados, discussed above, in this context. While the passage informs us about

²⁰⁸ Sidon: the coinage for Demetrios II (SC 1954. 7; 1955. 5) ended in 173 SE (140/39 BCE), and the coinage for Antiochos VII (SC 2102.1; 2103.1) began in 175 SE (138/7). Tyre: the coinage for Demetrios II (SC 1962; 1966; 1968. 6; 1970. 6) also ended in 173 SE, while the coinage for Antiochos VII (SC 2109. 1–2; 2110. 1–2; 2108. 1; 2115. 1) began in the following year.

²⁰⁹ Sidon: Demetrios II (SC 1957); Antiochos VII (SC 2104–6A). Tyre: Demetrios II (SC 1961; 1965; 1968–9); Antiochos VII (SC 2112–13). See ch. 3.2c.

²¹⁰ Mittag 2002: 391–3.

Seleukos II's measures to gain support from the strategic island, it also illustrates that the Aradians used the political climate to their advantage and 'got possession of a considerable territory on the mainland . . . and otherwise prospered'.²¹¹ It was not the king who granted the territory; rather, the political situation favoured cities' own activities. The example of a dossier from the late Hellenistic period, dated to late Gorpaios 203 (early September 109) corroborates these observations for the period beyond the scope of this book. A letter from Antiochos VIII or Antiochos IX to Ptolemaios X Alexander, and a copy of a decree (RC 71–2), are concerned with the city of Seleukeia in Pieria and the recognition of the city [. . . ε]ἰς τὸν ἅπαντα χρόνον ἐλευθέρους | [εἶναι . . .], 'to be free, for all times' (RC 71. 13–14).²¹² The freeing of the city fits the context of the war between Antiochos VIII and Antiochos IX. Berytos, for example, dropped its Seleukid name 'Laodikeia' on its coinage under Alexander Zabinas and referred to itself as Berytos (e.g. SC 2252). Antiochos VIII declared the city as *ἑρὰ καὶ ἄσυλος* (*I.Délos* 1551. 3–4), and it was during this period that the city again adopted the name Laodikeia (SC 2326–8).²¹³

Similar to the events described earlier in this chapter, the Seleukid rulers of the third century, and those of the second century in particular, were vying for support from communities in the Levant by granting them liberties. The 'grant' of freedom to Seleukeia in Pieria can be placed in this same context. However, the discourse of granting liberties does not necessarily have to be connected to historical reality. We do not know if Seleukeia in Pieria was more inclined towards the policies of the Seleukid king who had granted the city freedom, or if Berytos' reversal to mint coinage as 'Laodikeia' meant continuous loyalty to Antiochos VIII.

The communities of the second-century Levant illustrate the political activity of the groups within the kingdom. Moreover, these examples suggest that although we do not have the same source material for the cities of the Levant as is available for Makkabaeen Jerusalem, the cities' interest in individual decision-making and

²¹¹ Strab. 16. 2. 14: . . . χώραν τε ἐκτήσαντο τῆς περαιᾶς πολλήν, . . . , καὶ τὰλλα εὐθύνουν; cf. Duyrat 2005: 229–34; see ch. 2.1b.

²¹² See the commentary in RC and Mitford 1961: no. 3; cf. Ehling 2008: 223–5 who identifies Antiochos IX as the author, although this is not certain.

²¹³ Berytos: Moore 1992: 222–5; note also Sawaya 2004: 123–9. For other cities: Ehling 2008: 222–6.

independence was just as pronounced as that of their Judaeen neighbours. The transformation of the groups within the empires into agents is strikingly captured by Diodoros who, in the context of constant wars among the Seleukid princes, writes that the people liked the change (*μεταβολή*), since 'the people's favour was sought by each of the kings who returned' *τὰ πλήθῃ διὰ τὴν τῶν κατιόντων ἀεὶ βασιλέων ἀρέσκειαν* (Diod. Sic. 33. 4. 4).

3.3d The Army

Gaining political power and independence was the ultimate interest of the people of Judaea and the political actors in the cities. These interests also can be attributed to other actors in the eastern Mediterranean, such as the Kilikian and Arab dynasts, who appear as independent actors in the historical sources from the mid-second century onwards. Yet what were the interests of the one group that not only constantly changed sides between Seleukid king and usurper, but also whose support was one of the primary reasons for rulers' success: what were the interests of the army? M. M. Austin, for example, has stressed the importance of the armies for the Hellenistic rulers, and an analysis of the usurpers' attempts to claim the diadem further underlines the armies' crucial role in the Hellenistic kingdoms.²¹⁴ This section will demonstrate that the army of the second century was loyal to individual rulers and not to the House of Seleukos *per se*. Moreover, it will be argued that the ultimate interest of the army lay in the opportunity of choice. It was the change in allegiance to a new king that gave the army a political voice.

An analysis of 'the army' is of course artificial. Polybios' description of the Seleukid troops at Raphia (Pol. 5. 79. 3–13) and at the parade at Daphne (Pol. 30. 25. 3–11) illustrates the large diversity of Seleukid units. Seleukid troops varied in ethnic origin and military organization, ranging from Kilikian light infantry to Galatian swordsmen and from the Macedonian style phalanx to the cavalry.²¹⁵ 'The army' also varied in the different hierarchies within those units: ordinary soldiers surely at times had different interests than their

²¹⁴ E.g. M. M. Austin 1986: 456–65; Gehrke 1982: 254–6; while continuously present, the army does not play an individual role in Capdetrey 2007.

²¹⁵ See Mittag 2008: 48; Bickerman 1938: 74–83; Bar-Kochva 1976: esp. 20–75; Sekunda 2001: esp. 84–114.

commanding officers, and indeed mass defection also could give the light infantry a political voice. Our evidence does not allow an examination of all these different strata of the army. Nevertheless, the following analysis will demonstrate that certain general conclusions with regard to the behaviour of 'commanders' and 'troops', and thus 'the army', can be drawn.

The interests of 'the army' are inseparably linked to the question of the troops' loyalty to one particular king, a topic recently discussed by P. F. Mittag.²¹⁶ The key passage regarding this phenomenon is taken from the reign of Demetrios II following the deaths of Alexander Balas and Ptolemaios VI. According to Josephus, Demetrios II 'dismissed his army and reduced their pay and continued to give money only to the mercenaries who had come up from Crete and from the other islands'.²¹⁷ Regardless of whether we should consider Josephus' note on the reduction of pay as historical or as a literary dramatization, how can we explain the dismissal of the troops? Mittag has argued that it was the split in the dynasty that caused the Seleukid troops to change allegiance to the usurpers, and that it was for this reason that Demetrios II had dismissed his soldiers, as he could no longer trust his Seleukid troops.²¹⁸ This discussion of the loyalty of the 'Seleukid troops' requires refinement. Both the author of 1 Makkabees, and even more so Josephus, use the dismissal of troops to explain the accession of Antiochos VI and the success of the boy king's military commander, Tryphon. Although the accession of Antiochos VI was presumably connected to the dismissal of the troops, the actual act of dismissal needs to be placed in its appropriate context.

Demetrios II had forced the Ptolemaic troops back to Egypt after the death of Ptolemaios VI. Therefore, the dismissal of troops should be understood as a 'normal' procedure after war since the upkeep of a standing army was very expensive. The standing army was demobilized.²¹⁹ If interpreted this way, then, the demobilization of troops did not mean a change in the Seleukid king's attitude towards his troops as proposed by Mittag. Instead, the dismissal leads us to the core of second-century relations between kings and troops.

²¹⁶ Mittag 2008.

²¹⁷ Jos. Ant. 13. 129: ... διέλυσε τὴν στρατιὰν καὶ τὸν μισθὸν αὐτῶν ἐμίωσεν, καὶ μόνοις τοῦτον ἐχορήγει τοῖς ξενολογηθεῖσιν, οἱ συνανέβησαν ἐκ Κρήτης αὐτῷ καὶ ἐκ τῶν ἄλλων νήσων.

²¹⁸ Mittag 2008: 51–2. Mittag's definition of *katoikiai* is not followed here.

²¹⁹ See Bickerman 1938: 51.

The loyalty of the Seleukid army towards the Seleukid king is very hard to assess for the second century (and arguably for the earlier period as well). Kings constantly tried to bind their troops closely to them; however, this does not mean that there was an affirmative relationship between the Seleukid royal family and the army. The relationship between usurpers and the army illustrates this. Troops followed their commanders. Indeed, it was continuity that allowed Timarchos and Tryphon to claim the diadem, and this continuity formed the base of their support. Although Tryphon initially evoked continuity with Alexander Balas by promoting the latter's son, the troops followed him and not the infant Antiochos VI.²²⁰ This is clearly illustrated by the fact that after the death of the boy king, Tryphon continued to serve as the troops' commander, maintaining stability and paying the wages of his soldiers. The kings from outside the kingdom, Alexander Balas and Alexander Zabinas, styled themselves as sons of Antiochos IV and Alexander Balas respectively in order to appeal to the individuals' former success (and to oppose the current ruler). Similarly to Timarchos and Tryphon, Alexander Balas and Alexander Zabinas could insert themselves in the line of past kings in order to attract former kings' friends who were not in power under the new king.

The history of the second century and the coinage of the Seleukid kings and usurpers in this period suggest that troops were loyal to individual kings, and not to any royal house; troops followed kings who gave themselves names that were not Seleukid, who emphasized military success, and promised victories on their coinage.²²¹ While this development has long been connected with the split in the dynasty, an example from the third century illustrates not only that troops could revolt but also that loyalty lay (at least in this case) with an individual. When Epigenes, the former advisor and friend of Antiochos III, fell from power in 222, the Kyrrhestai revolted and were put down perhaps two years later, apparently after most of them had been killed (Pol. 5. 50. 7–8).²²² Moreover, the troops of Molon and Achaïos were loyal to their commander and not to the Seleukid king, and these dynamics remain very similar in the second century.

²²⁰ Cf. Mittag 2008: 52–3. See ch. 3.1c.

²²¹ It can hardly be a coincidence that depictions of Nikē on the coinage rise exponentially in the second century.

²²² Will 1962: 100–2 with Tarn 1928: 725. The Kyrrhestai seem to be still in revolt in 220 when, following Pol. 5. 57. 4, Achaïos hoped for their support.

Troops followed their commanders, and this could explain why Timarchos and Tryphon were able to declare themselves king. They led their troops and armies in their own name against a king who came from the outside, and they offered continuity and stability to both troops and commanders. On the other hand, the young usurpers from the outside also inserted themselves in the line of former kings, and thus tried to appeal to the troops of former kings. However, the emergence of young usurpers indicates that there must be more to the phenomenon than continuity. Commanders such as Tryphon would not have been able to continue their career under the new king, and therefore would have chosen to side with another king. Yet was the reference to former kings (and to Alexander in particular) and the promise of success enough to make the armies join young and potentially inexperienced kings who came from abroad?

The stress on continuity and individual success was important, and it is visible on the coinage of both kings and usurpers. If these promises on the coinage were fulfilled then it is very likely that a strong bond between troops and ruler was formed. However, in order to ascertain troops' interest in usurpers we should not follow too closely the rulers' discourse of success as employed on the coinage. Nor should we assume that these promises were enough to make troops change allegiance. In fact, it was the choice itself that was the value. Reminiscent of the period of the Successors,²²³ choice gave the army a political voice, and it should not be surprising that troops favoured the promises of new usurpers over established kings. Although Demetrios I had reigned for a period of roughly ten years before Alexander Balas' landing, the promises of a new king were attractive to a large number of troops. Commanders would change sides if a new king took the diadem, and both troops and commanders would be interested in the new king's royal offers and promises, and ultimately his success. It was the act of following (or disregarding) royal promises that enabled the army to make politics. 'The army' could follow Alexander Balas and thus *make* Alexander Balas king. Commanders could become 'close friends' of the new king, and perhaps (although this is speculative) Tryphon was indeed one of these friends. Even if conjectural, the picture remains the same: troops could follow a new king and thus *unmake* the former king.

²²³ e.g. Plut *Dem.* 49. 4; cf. Bosworth 2002: 247–54.

The problem with Demetrios II's dismissal of his troops therefore—to return full circle to the opening story—was not so much a question of loyalty to royal blood, the actual dismissal of troops, or Demetrios II's reliance on mercenaries (although all of these factors could be points of friction). As illustrated above, the revolt of the Kyrrhestai under Antiochos III was long-lasting and caused instability in his satrapy, but in this instance it did not threaten the position of the Seleukid king. Yet even if the Kyrrhestai did not lead to long-term political frictions, one cannot conclude that Antiochos III's initial position was necessarily stronger than that of Demetrios II. The problem arising from Demetrios II's dismissal of troops was the presence of a second power-holder in the vicinity, which allowed the army to voice their discontent in a channelled way; they 'chose' their king. It gave the army the opportunity to express political opinion, and the choice to serve a new king who would not dismiss them. If these hopes were not fulfilled, 'the army' (like the people of Antiocheia or the Makkabees) could join a new king.

'The army' of the second century followed individual commanders. It is possible that troops or their commanders were loyal to certain kings, and that it was these factions which the usurpers on the coast of the Levant appealed to when they declared themselves sons of former kings. Troops and commanders joined usurpers not only for their promise of military success and wealth but also because having choice per se was ultimately one of their main interests. The presence of Tryphon and Antiochos VI after the establishment of Demetrios II gave 'the army' the opportunity to make kings who would act in their interest. It was for this reason that they acknowledged a new king. If we accept this hypothesis, it also becomes clear why Antiochos VII was immediately able to gather troops as soon as he landed on the coast of the Levant (as Alexander Zabinas did after him). The former troops of Demetrios II joined the king, and contingents of Tryphon's troops changed rulers because they thought it was to their advantage. The promises of Antiochos VII were no more acceptable than those of Tryphon, and these troops did not necessarily think Tryphon a worse ruler than Antiochos VII. It was the choice itself that was advantageous, as it gave a voice to individual soldiers and commanding officers; this choice would remain a crucial element of troops' behaviour in the vicinity of more than one king.²²⁴

²²⁴ Cf. Flaig 1992: 132–73; indirectly: Szidat 2010: 195.

3.4 USURPERS IN THE SECOND CENTURY: CONCLUSION

This chapter has illustrated the dynamics of political power in the Seleukid empire in the late second century, and it has analysed usurpers' royal offers to the groups in the kingdom. Most importantly, the literary and documentary evidence of this period makes it possible to assess the different groups' perception of, and reaction to, royal offers. A reinterpretation of the literary and documentary evidence considerably affects previous scholarship's assumptions about the second century, and establishes the Seleukid Levant as a vital and understudied part of Seleukid history.²²⁵ Although the Seleukid kings of the second century held control over less territory than in the previous century, the dynamics of this period were not entirely different from those of the third century before the accession of Antiochos III. Moreover, a reassessment of the available evidence makes it possible to write a history of Seleukid counter-kings, but more importantly it also makes clear that most of the literary sources were affected by post-usurpation reconstructions. With this in mind, the usurpers' claims to the diadem in fact do not appear to be crucially different from those of their Seleukid opponents.

While usurpations occurred not only in the Levant but also in the eastern parts of the empire, such as Media and Babylonia, the Levant has played a much more prominent role in this analysis. This is largely due to the different type of evidence concerning these regions. Although the recent editions of cuneiform documents and numismatic discoveries illustrate that Babylonia also played a much larger role in later Seleukid history than was previously assumed, it is still very difficult to adequately assess the dynamics of Babylonian power plays beyond the level of political history.²²⁶ For example, we know that Kammaškiri of Elam reached Babylonia in the late 140s; yet so far it is impossible to ascertain how the elites of Babylonia reacted to this, or whether his activities were at times supported by the Seleukid centre (as we could see in the example of the Makkabees).

The usurpers of the second century created royal images that contrasted with their direct royal opponents. Moreover, like Molon

²²⁵ Important recent studies such as e.g. Honigman 2014 address specifically the world of the Seleukid second century; see also n. 2.

²²⁶ See, however, Boiy and Mittag 2011, as well as Clancier forthcoming; Clancier and Monerie 2014.

and Achaïos, Timarchos and Tryphon also created non-Seleukid images, and stressed their distinction from the royal Seleukid house. Timarchos styled himself 'Great King' and Tryphon stressed Hellenistic *tryphē* both on his coins and in his name. Even if Alexander Balas and Alexander Zabinas inserted themselves into the line of previous kings, their imagery was clearly individual and referred to Alexander the Great, instead of the conventional Seleukid portrait of the late third century. Antiochos IV and Demetrios I incorporated, for example, the *anastolē* in some of their images, and created individual reverses on their coinage, yet the *imitatio Alexandri* peaked under Alexander Balas and Tryphon (and to a lesser degree under Alexander Zabinas). While this chapter enabled a thorough discussion of the royal offers of usurpers in the competitive environment of the second-century Levant, its major outcome is that it was possible to analyse the perception of royal offers.

We can discuss the second-century evidence with more confidence and authority than the third-century scenario. The surviving third-century evidence does not allow us to trace the engagement of the groups in Asia Minor with the royal contenders. The behaviour of the Philomelids in the contest between Seleukos II and Antiochos Hierax would have been revealing, and it has been suggested that active individual behaviour can be traced, for example, in the actions of Olympichos of Karia and of the city of Smyrna.²²⁷ But we cannot get further than that. In the second-century Levant, however, we can. 1–2 Makkabees and Josephus put more literary evidence at our disposal. Beyond the sheer availability of evidence, however, the presence of two contenders for the diadem in the Levant amplified political dynamics. Kings and usurpers transformed the audiences of royal offers into active agents who could pursue their own political agendas. The people of Antiocheia on the Orontes could refuse to obey their king, and the Makkabees and other local power-holders could begin diplomatic relations with the opponent of their current ally.

One of the key elements that this discussion has shown is that the acceptance of usurpers was not very different from the acceptance of Seleukid kings. For the groups within the Seleukid kingdom there was

²²⁷ See chs 1.3, 2.1b, and Appendix B.

not a qualitative difference between the Seleukid king and another contender to the diadem who promised security. Although the Makkabees used the wars between rival claimants to the diadem to establish themselves as the leading power in Judaea, their relationship with Alexander Balas and Antiochos VII also reveals that they were particularly interested in fostering a relationship with the stronger king since they were the biggest, but certainly not the only, player in Jerusalem. For the other cities in the Levant, these internal community dynamics remain invisible, although it is very likely that they existed. Moreover, these cities frequently changed sides between the Seleukid kings and usurpers, and this also seems to have been the case for Antiocheia on the Orontes, 'The city' did not favour Seleukid kings over usurpers without any claims to the Seleukid family. The fortress-city of Apameia in particular illustrates that the city's previous relationship with the Seleukid kings did not prevent it from following Tryphon or even from becoming the site of his last stand. While in the case of Apameia personal loyalties might have bound the city to the usurper, other cities, such as Tyre and Sidon, were (similarly to the Makkabees) vying for their independence from the Seleukid kings.

The observation that there was apparently no bond between the Seleukid king and the people from the Seleukid 'heartlands' is further strengthened by a passage preserved in Justin's work. When the campaigns of Antiochos VII in Babylonia appeared too onerous, the people of Babylonia again changed sides and supported the Parthians (*Epit.* 38. 10. 8). The idea of change also seems to be one of the main interests of the army, and modern historiography's presupposed bond between the Seleukid king and his troops (surely following a Seleukid narrative) cannot be upheld. The troops changed allegiance between kings and usurpers, and thus gained a political voice. It was only when the Seleukid kings could claim a monopoly of political power, as in the reign of Antiochos VII, that the seeking of individual interest could be slowed down, and the political actions of the groups within the kingdom could be halted.

We have now met the Seleukid usurpers, their royal offers, and the spaces of their kingship from the mid-third century to the last quarter of the second century BCE. The question remains to what degree the actions of political agents in the kingdom are a marker of the Seleukid kingdom of the second century after the accession of Antiochos IV. Scholars have emphasized the differences between the

second-century and third-century Seleukid kingdom, stressing that the later empire was significantly altered by the Roman defeats and the split in the dynasty. Whether this view is tenable shall be the topic of chapter 4 where the phenomenon of usurpers in the Seleukid empire will be discussed.

Usurpers in the Seleukid Empire

We have seen that the dynamics of the Seleukid kingdom in the second century differed from those in the third. The reasons for this may lie in the split in the dynasty after the death of Seleukos IV, which introduced a new phase in the Seleukid state. Yet were the differences systemic and qualitative, or was the Seleukid kingdom in the second century an acceleration of processes, such as individual groups' interests, that were already present in the previous century, and in particular in the period before the long reign of Antiochos III? The kingship of Molon can again serve as an instructive example. According to Polybios' narrative, Molon's self-asserted kingship ended when he lost to Antiochos III's large army. Although it is unclear how much of Mesopotamia Molon occupied before he was challenged, he had been victorious in at least two engagements against Seleukid troops, and against a high-powered Seleukid official (Pol. 5. 46. 1–48. 16). Was this scenario so different from those of the second century? Was Molon not accompanied by formerly Seleukid troops? And was it not rather crucial (as suggested in the last pages of ch. 2) that in the late third century Antiochos III reacted to tensions within the empire with the creation of a discourse of Seleukid identity, Seleukid space, as well as a discourse on the loyalty of Seleukid troops to their king? In order to answer these questions we must consider the usurpers' origins. For Molon, it was the rich satrapy of Media that made him formidable (Pol. 5. 43. 8), and it was his position as a member of the high power-holders of the Seleukid state, and being a well-connected friend of former kings, that enabled him to take the diadem. Usurpers' individual origins have been discussed in chapters 2 and 3,¹

¹ e.g. Achaïos in ch. 2.2b, and Tryphon and Timarchos in chs 3.2b and 3.2c.

but the combination of these individual cases offer insights into the phenomenon of usurpation itself.

This chapter will investigate the political impact of usurpers' revolts in the Seleukid kingdom in two parts. First, it will diachronically summarize the main characteristics of the relationship between Seleukid usurpers and Seleukid kings. Discussing the social origins of usurpers, their royal images, and the places where it was possible for them to be king, this section is designed to provide a model of usurpation in the Seleukid kingdom. The second section, in turn, will discuss usurpers' political impact. It will analyse royal reaction to revolting individuals, usurpers' former territories, and how usurpers influenced the Seleukid kings' royal offers. It also will raise the question of whether it is possible to ascertain if a negative image of usurpers emerged from these royal reactions. These two sections help to situate the phenomenon of usurpation within the political system of the Seleukid state, which will be discussed in detail in the final chapter.

4.1 THE ORIGIN OF USURPERS

4.1a Competitors for the Diadem

Livy's short note (*Liv. per.* 50) on the murder of Demetrios I's wife, son, and 'all friends' (*amici omnes*) by Alexander Balas' chancellor dramatically illustrates the core of Seleukid power relations. The massacre of Demetrios I's court in Antiocheia eliminated Alexander Balas' rivals to the diadem. Those who were dangerous to his claims were the immediate family of the king, and the former king's *philoï*. Since primogeniture did not exist in the Seleukid kingdom, other surviving family members were always a threat to the reigning king. The special attention Alexander Balas gave to the king's friends, however, is instructive, and it is the role they played that is decisive for our understanding of the period's tensions.

As has become evident in chapters 1–3, the Seleukid kingdom was ruled by the king and his Friends.² But we need to distinguish among these *philoï*, that is, between the king's Friends and friends. This distinction, recently evoked by John Ma for the Antigonid court, is

² On Friends: e.g. Capdetrey 2007: 277–329.

crucial.³ Many power-holders in the Seleukid kingdom, such as the high-priest Jonathan under Alexander Balas, Xerxes of Arsamosata (Pol. 8. 23) under Antiochos III, and Chionis of Alinda (*Amyzon* 14) under the same king, were Friends, *philoï*, of the king, and many of these agents have been introduced in chapter 1. Beyond the Friends, however, there were also the king's friends. The king's friends were the high power-holders in the Seleukid kingdom. The system of ruling high power-holders derived from the wake of Alexander the Great's campaigns, when two groups of royal companions emerged: those with the king and those who were entrusted with satrapal authorities.⁴ While some of the closest and most powerful friends of the king were continuously in his proximity,⁵ other close friends were sent to the most important peripheral positions in the empire, such as the satrapy of Media and the position of the *ὁ ἐπὶ τῶν ἄνω σατραπειῶν*. Seleukos I had entrusted his son with this position, and while the responsibilities connected with it might have changed between the third and second centuries (or perhaps were never as closely defined as modern scholarship would like to imagine), the rising power of the Parthians surely ensured the office's continued importance. The Seleukid kings entrusted these important positions to their friends. Antiochos IV granted this office to his 'childhood friend' Timarchos (App. Syr. 45 [235]), and Demetrios I also gave the same position to a friend who supported his claim to the diadem very early on.⁶ Therefore, if Antiochos III appointed or confirmed Molon to the position of *ὁ ἐπὶ τῶν ἄνω σατραπειῶν*, this should indicate that he was a very trusted friend.⁷ The position of the *ὁ ἐπὶ τῶν ἐπιτάδε τοῦ Ταύρου πραγμάτων*, the chief administrator of Asia Minor, was of similar importance to that of the satrap of Media,⁸ and this is demonstrated by the individuals who held the office. Achaios (Pol. 4. 48. 10) and Zeuxis were appointed because of the loyalty they had displayed to the Seleukid king, and Nikanor, the high priest of the region beyond the Tauros (SEG 54. 1353), and Olympiodoros, the

³ Ma 2011: 525–6.

⁴ Savalli-Lestrade 1998: 303, 358; Spawforth 2007; see also Brüggemann 2010: 33.

⁵ See e.g. Pol. 8. 21. 1 and 5. 56. 10. For the denial of access to the king: e.g. Apelles under Philip V: Pol. 5. 26. 10–11 with 5. 2. 7–10; analysed by Herman 1997: 217–19; Savalli-Lestrade 1998: 357; cf. Strootman 2014: 151–9.

⁶ Herrmann 1987: 175–8.

⁷ Savalli-Lestrade 1998: 358.

⁸ On the importance of both positions: Capdetrey 2007: 267–73.

person in charge of the sanctuaries in Koilē Syria and Phoenicia (*SEG* 57. 1838), were personally chosen by Antiochos III.⁹

Conflict between kings and royal friends emerged most often during negotiations between king and Friends at the accession of a new ruler. More specifically, when a young king inherited the friends of the previous king (as discussed in ch. 2), or when friends had to choose sides after the second-century split in the dynasty (ch. 3), tensions erupted. At times, young kings were confronted with powerful political figures from the previous reign. Polybios' account of the early years of Philip V of Macedon and Antiochos III clearly demonstrates this. Achaïos and Molon were already in socially and politically prominent positions at the time of Antiochos III's accession. Both Hermeias, Seleukos III's *ὁ ἐπὶ τῶν πραγμάτων* (Pol. 5. 41. 1–2), and Epigenes, who held a prominent position in the young Antiochos III's council, had been friends of Seleukos II.¹⁰ Retaining the friends of the former king is not necessarily surprising, and may be compared with the first years of Alexander the Great's reign, which were characterized by his relationship with his father's companions.¹¹ The dynamics in the Seleukid kingdom, however, were systemically different. Of course, the young king must have relied on former king's friends to maintain the peaceful administration of his empire. Yet the position of the former king's friends was more precarious than in Argead Macedonia.¹² In a kingdom that lacked an established imperial nobility, the social elite's position was ultimately dependent on their immediate relationship with the king, and not on their individual social standing.¹³ While an individual's prior achievements had some merit, and their status made it more likely that their descendants might have a relationship with a future king, individual achievements

⁹ Zeuxis: Savalli-Lestrade 1998: 36–8; Capdetrey 2007: 297–300. Nikanor: Savalli-Lestrade 1998: 34–5. Olympiodoros: Jones 2009 with Cotton and Wörrle 2007, and Gera 2009.

¹⁰ See also ch. 2.2b.

¹¹ Retaining friends: it is not necessary to assume that all official posts were exchanged with the accession of a new king: G. Weber 1997: 49–50; Schmitt 1964: 120; Strootman 2011: 72–4; cf. Bengtson 1944: 59–60. Alexander: G. Weber 2009: 86–7; also Badian 1960: 324–38; Bosworth 1988: 25–8; Heckel 1992: 1–56.

¹² For Philip II's Macedonia: Lane Fox 2011: 357–60. Strootman 2014: 122 downplays these differences.

¹³ Bickerman 1938: 42; cf. Capdetrey 2007: 385–6 with Savalli-Lestrade 1998: 377; Dreyer 2011: 48 and 54–5; Brüggemann 2010: 35. For an alternative view: Strootman 2014: 118–19.

did not necessarily guarantee a status of similar standing under a new ruler.

During the first years of his reign, a young king would determine who among the inherited Friends would become a friend, thus shaping the political elite he wanted and securing his own position. This process of reaffirming the relationship between the king and his friends caused political frictions, and this has been discussed with reference to Polybios' account of Antiochos III's accession (Pol. 5. 41–56).¹⁴ Apelles' fall from favour under Philip V, and the murder of Hermeias and his family under Antiochos III clearly demonstrates that it was the king who decided if these friends were acceptable to him or not. At the same time, however, it was presumably not in the Seleukid king's interest to display his power and his friends' dependence. The *topos* of royal tyranny was of course largely a discourse,¹⁵ yet in a world without an early modern theory of the divine right of kingship, a king's position was ultimately dependent on his acceptance by the various groups within the empire, and therefore his friends' support was important.¹⁶ It is probably not just a coincidence that the individuals who became the king's friends during the early years of the king's reign proved to be the most loyal.

Although the accession of Antiochos III illustrates the possibility of tension between the friends of a previous king and the new ruler, secession and revolt do not have to be characterized as ordinary occurrences. This can be briefly demonstrated with the accession of Seleukos IV. Despite the defeat of the Seleukid armies against the Romans and the death of Antiochos III in the Elymais soon afterwards, Seleukos IV became king in 187 when he had already been involved in Seleukid high politics for roughly eleven years. After the death of his older brother in 193, he became the eldest living son of Antiochos III, he had held court at Lysimacheia, and he fought in the

¹⁴ Moreover, it has been suggested that the king could use these frictions to his advantage: see ch. 2.2b; Herman 1997: 214; cf. Mehl 2003: 154.

¹⁵ On tyranny and kings now: L. Mitchell 2013.

¹⁶ For an 'absolute' king: Elias 1969: 178–221; also Duindam 1995; Duindam 2003; Spawforth 2007: 1–16. See also Strootman 2014: 118. If the literary accounts on murdering courtiers are reliable, the fact that kings could be murdered by *philoi* presumably should mean that they could kill kings since they were physically near the king. Therefore, this assassination does not necessarily illustrate the power of the friends. This interpretation is underlined by the fact that the assassins do not survive long after their coup. For Seleukos III: App. Syr. 66 (348); Seleukos IV: App. Syr. 45 (233).

war against Rome.¹⁷ While the death of the king necessitated a renegotiation of social dynamics at court and a re-evaluation of his closest friends, Seleukos IV's familiarity with his father's friends ensured that his accession did not generate the same precarious scenario as for the accession of a young king.¹⁸

The split in the dynasty, however, accelerated the possibility of conflict. This can be described in two distinct but not mutually exclusive ways: competing lines of Seleukid princes made it precarious to be a former royal friend, yet it also could offer opportunities to gain political influence. At Demetrios I's arrival in Antiocheia, the Seleukid king had not only Antiochos V but also Lysias, the young king's *ὁ ἐπὶ τῶν πραγμάτων* executed (1 Makk. 7.3), and it has been suggested that the events at Antiocheia on the Orontes also influenced Timarchos' decision to secede. This scenario was very similar to that under Alexander Balas. Livy's description of the murder of the *omnes amici* of Demetrios I does not indicate a slaughter of all the royal *philoï*, only of the former king's friends. They were Demetrios I's most trusted and highest commanders, and were executed either because they would not swear allegiance to a new king or because the king did not trust them.¹⁹ In the third century, Neolaos, Alexander, and all those who had actively taken part in Molon's revolt of 222 committed suicide after the defeat of their king (Pol. 5. 54. 3–5), perhaps illustrating the chances of survival they saw for themselves if they were captured.

The opportunity for both Herakleides and Tryphon to gain influential positions under the new king in Antiocheia was similarly slim. Herakleides had been removed from office (App. Syr. 47 [242]), and Tryphon, a former friend of Alexander Balas, may have offered the diadem to Ptolemaios VI after he had opened the gates of Antiocheia (Diod. Sic. 32. 9c). In the same manner as Molon, Achaïos, and Timarchos, these former king's friends took matters into their own hands. While Herakleides supported the claims of Alexander Balas, Tryphon gathered the former supporters of Alexander Balas under his own standard; he sought out the young Antiochos VI, and made himself the guardian of a new king. The account of Galaistes, a high commander

¹⁷ On Seleukos IV: Stähelin 1923b; cf. Liv. 37. 44. 6.

¹⁸ See also Chrubasik forthcoming c.

¹⁹ See also Savalli-Lestrade 1998: 357.

under Ptolemaios VI who revolted after losing all his properties under Ptolemaios VIII Euergetes II, bears striking similarities.²⁰

This survey leaves us with the unsurprising observation that most Seleukid usurpers were connected to a king. Only a member of the small social group around the king was able to obtain an influential political position within the Seleukid kingdom. Holding an important rank enabled usurpers to accumulate resources and social capital that would enable them to secede, and ensured their troops would follow. The fact that Molon, Achaïos, Timarchos, and Tryphon seceded at the accession of a new king illustrates the precarious situation of former king's friends. Their social and political positions were determined by their continued reciprocal relationship with the new ruler, and this relationship was not guaranteed. Therefore, while friends were generally loyal to their king, they were not necessarily loyal to the Seleukid dynasty, and the accession of a young king could cause these tensions to surface. While the secession of the royal Friends was a usual occurrence in an empire as large as the Seleukid state (see ch. 1), the secession of the royal friends is indicative of structural difficulties in the Seleukid kingdom. Yet again, this requires a qualification: the friends' secession was symptomatic of the problem and not its cause.

4.1b The Place of Usurpation: Centre, Periphery, and the Crisis of the Dynasty

The size of the Seleukid kingdom necessitated the need for local and central power-holders. While Ekbatana was 400 km as the crow flies from Seleukeia on the Tigris, both Ekbatana and Sardeis were roughly 1,000 km from Antiocheia on the Orontes. The distance of roughly 2,400 km between Seleukeia on the Tigris and Ai Khanoum illustrates the vastness of the empire. In some regions that were deemed important to the empire yet peripheral enough that its resources could not challenge the king's monopoly of economic and political power, semi-autonomous dynasts—with or without the title of king—fulfilled local administrative and euergetic functions. While these dynasts seceded at times, they were also quickly reincorporated

²⁰ Veisse 2004: 47–8 and Huß 2001: 602–3, with references to a dossier of papyri.

into the folds of the empire by the king or one of his agents. Beyond the peripheral regions, however, there were the arteries, the 'archipelagos',²¹ which were vital to the Seleukid king. Asia Minor, with its capital in Sardeis, and Media, with its capital in Ekbatana, had enormous resources and consequently high power-holders were installed in these regions as representatives of the king. Indeed, these regions were rich. The wealth of Media made Molon 'formidable' at the outset of his rebellion (Pol. 5. 43. 8). Strabo emphasizes the riches of the Macedonian colonies of Media founded under the Seleukids (Strab. 11. 13. 6–7). These accounts draw attention to the region's abundance in men, horses, natural resources, and precious metals, and lay stress on the defensibility of the capital of Ekbatana and the whole satrapy. The Zagros range separated Media from Mesopotamia, and the few passes through which an army could cross it made it very predictable from which directions enemy troops would march into the province.

Asia Minor and Sardeis were of similar importance. This westernmost part of the Asian continent with its geographic and political diversity—ranging from the alluvial plains of the Maiander to the mountainous ranges of Mysia; from the Greek cities in the coastal areas to local dynasts, villages, and Galatian tribes in inner Anatolia—provided valuable resources as well as a supply of Mysian and Galatian mercenaries and access to Thracian auxiliaries. Conceived as too important by the Achaimenid Great Kings to be entrusted to one satrap,²² Hellenistic Asia Minor was not only a place of dynasts, Galatians, and strong cities, but also a region of vital interest for the Ptolemaic and, occasionally, the Antigonid kings, and thus it required a strong power-holder if the Seleukid king was not in the area.

Therefore, it should not be surprising that the satrapy of Media was the backbone of two of the Seleukid usurpations in the late third and early second centuries, and both Achaïos and Antiochos Hierax made themselves kings while in charge of political affairs in Seleukid Asia Minor. Regardless of Molon's involvement in the politics of the king's friends at the accession of Antiochos III, the Seleukid king was at this point in Antiocheia on the Orontes preparing for a war against Ptolemaic Egypt. It was the king's absence that allowed Molon to prepare his revolt. Polybios underlines that this was very similar to

²¹ Capdetrey 2008: 65.

²² See ch. 2.3.

Achaïos' usurpation. Only when the king was on a campaign and absent from the western parts of the kingdom did Achaïos venture to claim his kingship; all usurpations in this period occurred in the absence of the king in distant regions of the empire.

Usurpation in the absence of the king suggests that it was the travelling king who kept the peripheral regions under his control.²³ Yet as outlined in chapter 1, the system of the travelling king primarily kept the local power-holders in check. The secession of the chief administrators in Asia Minor and Media was dangerous. Their resources could threaten the position of the Seleukid king's monopoly as the most powerful individual within the Seleukid empire, and thus could question his kingship. At the same time, the wealth of resources at the administrators' disposal was vital to their claims to power. Yet we should not see these conditions as the reasons for their revolt, since otherwise usurpations should have ceased in the middle of the second century, when in 188 and after June 148 respectively Asia Minor and Media were no longer part of the Seleukid empire. But this does not account for the fact that after the death of his ward, Tryphon was able to defend his claim to the diadem for roughly five years in the Levant in the presence of the Seleukid king. Tryphon had been closely associated (expressed through a participle of *συνίστημι*) with the king and those around the king (Strab. 16. 2. 10), and Strabo notes in the same passage that Tryphon's birth in a hamlet near Apameia allowed him to use the city as his stronghold. The city of Apameia—the southernmost city of the Syrian *tetrapolis*, and the royal stud of the Seleukid kings, less than 100 km south of Antiocheia on the Orontes—became the base and (if following Jos. *Ant.* 13. 224) the last stand of a king unrelated to the House of Seleukos, thus denying Seleukid attempts to create a political and ideological centre.²⁴

The emergence of usurpers in close proximity to the Seleukid kings suggests that the reason behind usurpers' uprisings was not the vastness and heterogeneity of the Seleukid empire. If we look closely, revolt near the Seleukid kings also was not unheard of in the third century. While the revolts during the early reign of Antiochos I (OGIS 219. 3–5) can be explained as revolts in the absence of a new king in a young kingdom, it might be only incidental that the revolt of the

²³ Capdetrey 2007: 374–83 and now Kosmin 2014: 142–73; see also Briant 2002: 186–95.

²⁴ Capdetrey 2007: 359–62; cf. Kosmin 2014: 103–15.

Kyrrhestai in the early reign of Antiochos III did not result in a usurpation comparable to those of the second century (Pol. 5. 50. 8; 57. 4). If, however, revolts also occurred in the presence of the king in the third century, it is plausible that only the frequency of usurpations in the second century was connected to the divided dynasty. A scenario such as this suggests a linear evolution from third-century usurpations to those of the second century, an acceleration of the precarious relationship between kings, the king's friends, and the monopoly of power. We are confronted then with a third-century process that developed yet did not radically differ in its second-century context.

Although both Alexander Balas and Alexander Zabinas wished to be acknowledged as successors of former Seleukid kings, hoping to find support amongst their fathers' friends or sympathizers, the dynamics were only partially different from the usurpation of Tryphon. The division of the royal house enabled them to become kings within the direct vicinity of the Seleukid king. The fact that both Alexander Balas and Alexander Zabinas were initially invested by external powers may throw light on them seizing the opportunity to usurp, but it does not explain their success when they had landed in the Levant. These usurpers could not rely on their military achievements in the Seleukid kingdom, and thus they initially had no loyal troops at their command. For this reason they claimed a connection to a deceased king. They attempted to link their individual royal *personae* with previously successful Seleukid kings who descended from another dynastic line. The success of Alexander Balas, and perhaps also Alexander Zabinas, must be explained in conjunction with the support they received from the friends of Antiochos IV, Alexander Balas, and perhaps also Antiochos VII, who were ousted from the courts of Demetrios I and Demetrios II. Thus their positioning in the lineage of a Seleukid king not only gave many groups in the kingdom an element of choice, it also gave former power-holders an opportunity to regain prestige and power in the vicinity of a different king.

From the middle of the 150s onwards some claimants of Seleukid ancestry appeared on the coast of the Levant, and with internal and, at times, external support defeated the Seleukid king in battle or drove him out of Antiocheia. While one might argue that these examples demonstrate that for usurpation in the centre of the Seleukid empire to be successful, it was critical to be a member of the Seleukid dynasty,

this was not necessarily the case. Reference to royal ancestors should be understood as a signifier that offered the friends of former kings a new political alternative, most strikingly attested in the case of Herakleides and Alexander Balas, when Alexander's coup d'état was even initiated by the friends of Antiochos IV. By reverting to the reign of past kings, the usurpers did not insert themselves primarily into a line of kings, but they offered refuge to the displaced friends of their chosen ancestors. Beyond ancestors, it is important to observe that Tryphon did not place himself in the Seleukid lineage, and that he reigned for more than four years, following the example of previous usurpers who had installed themselves as markedly non-Seleukid kings in regions where the kings were absent. Although political tensions increased, the initial cause for usurpations in the second and third centuries remained the same: the Seleukid kings were not able to closely bind their friends to them, and at the same time make membership to their family the only acceptable prerequisite for kingship in the Seleukid empire. We have seen this not only in the activities of kings and their friends, but also in the way in which usurpers crafted their royal images as part of their royal offers.

4.1c The Images of Kingship

It has been argued throughout this book that the royal coinage was an important element in the transmission of the usurpers' royal image to their audiences. The coinage bore the royal name of the new king as well as a royal portrait, illustrating and underlining his claim to power. The lack of usurpers' royal letters in epigraphic sources in particular makes the royal coinage (apart from possible clay seals in Mesopotamia)²⁵ the only surviving medium of usurpers' self-representation and royal offers. This section will illustrate that creating a distinction from dynastic kings was a decisive strategy of usurpers' self-representation, and it will be argued that it is this emphasis on difference that allows us to draw conclusions with regard to the competition between the Seleukid kings and their opponents.

Once we move beyond the concept that a portrait depicts the perfect reproduction of its original sitter, and instead generated a

²⁵ Jennifer R. Hicks (UCL) is preparing a study on the Seleukid seals from Babylonia.

finely created *persona*, we can ascertain many levels of difference. For example, imagery differed by age and physiognomy. While the young Antiochos III was depicted as a young man with idealized features (in accordance with the royal portraits of his father and grandfather), Achaïos portrayed himself as a mature man, which was emphasized with a full-grown beard and wrinkles on his forehead. With this focus on maturity, his royal image arguably attempted to stylize the immaturity of the royal coinage of Antiochos III (of course we do not know whether this was perceived as convincing).²⁶ Imagery also differed with regard to attributes of the portraits on the coinage. Tryphon was depicted with wild hair and a luxurious military helmet, and Timarchos was shown wearing a Boiotian helmet and styled himself as 'Great King'. While the coinage of Timarchos and Antiochos VI depicted the *Dioskuroi*, both Alexander Balas and Tryphon placed an emphasis on *tryphē*, which up to this point had not been a part of Seleukid iconography. This stress on difference enables us to ascertain the following: over a period of roughly 120 years all usurpers followed a pattern of differentiating themselves from their rivals. This underlines that the usurpers thought it was possible and arguably advantageous to become king in the Seleukid empire without being visually and stylistically a mirror image of the Seleukid king. Antiochos Hierax did insert himself into a line of Seleukid ancestors, but he did so in competition with his brother Seleukos II, who created a completely new royal image, thus again emphasizing the differentiation in imagery between king and usurper.

One might of course argue that this stress on difference is hardly surprising since not all usurpers were members of the House of Seleukos. Thus, how could they persuasively insert themselves into the royal Seleukid line? One could argue that Achaïos, the *οἰκέλος* of Seleukos III, was only a cousin of the kings and his royal connection was distant when compared to that of his *συγγενής* Antiochos III.²⁷ I do not propose that we should disregard entirely the pro-Seleukid narrative of Polybios when he writes about the king *κατὰ φύσιν* (Pol. 5. 57. 6), but the crucial element is less about their inability to insert themselves into the Seleukid royal line, and rather about their success despite their rejection of Seleukid royal images. The usurpers' emphasis on differentiation suggests that creating distinction was the

²⁶ See ch. 2.2b with Figs. 2.5 and 2.7.

²⁷ Cf. Gehrke 1982: 268.

usurpers' conscious choice. They promised (at least on their coinage) a royal image that differed from what the Seleukid kings presented.

Most importantly, both the reoccurrence of usurpations and the duration of individual usurpers' reigns strongly suggests that these non-Seleukid royal offers were accepted. Ultimately, the presence of Seleukid usurpers and their distinction from royal Seleukid iconography illustrates that the Seleukid kingdom was not exclusively a Seleukid space. Dareios I, the Persian Great King, strove to insert himself visually into the line of Achaimenid kings (more on this in section 5.3). The individuality of the usurpers' imagery, however, bears witness to the individuality of royal claims. The usurpers' royal offers contained a new, non-Seleukid royal image, and through their distinctive royal offers they were accepted as kings.

4.1d Usurpers as Kings

The dynamics of the relationship between the king, his friends, and the friends of former kings was a critical aspect of the origin of usurpations. The phenomenon of usurpation was accelerated in the middle of the second century, as two royal lines competed with one another, making it difficult (if not impossible) for a former king's friends to be accepted as the present king's friends. Tryphon's usurpation illustrates that a former king's friend could still become king in the late second century, following third-century precedents. In the topography of usurpation, a clear distinction between the third and early to mid-second centuries can be established. While usurpers in the earlier phase exclusively took the diadem in the absence of the king, this was different for the second century. The continuity of usurpation lay in the failure of the Seleukid kings to monopolize kingship in the Seleukid state and establish a widely accepted dynasty. The weakness of the dynasty is also evident in the usurpers' royal images. The usurpers employed iconographic elements that were known in the Seleukid kingdom, yet the usurpers' coinage marked a clear distinction from their Seleukid counterparts, questioning Seleukid kingship and power within the Seleukid state. The individual Seleukid kings opposed these usurpers, and in most instances eventually won the upper hand. But beyond a call to arms and opposition, how did the Seleukid king react to usurpers and the regions that had supported them?

4.2 ROYAL REACTION: PUNISHMENT, PARDON, AND ADAPTATION

While it has been argued in chapter 1 of this book that the Seleukid kings were content to tolerate dynasts outside the Seleukid core regions, usurpers that could diminish the resources and thus the position of the king were not acceptable. Yet, for the most part, there is very little evidence of Seleukid reaction in the aftermath of usurpation. Moreover, the literary sources contain differing stories, perhaps reflecting the uncertainties of war. Alexander Balas was decapitated by either his commanders or by a dynast, and his head was brought to Ptolemaios VI (Jos. *Ant.* 13. 118; 1 Makk. 11. 17–18; Diod. Sic. 32. 9d, 10); Antiochos Hierax was slain by a band of Galatians (Pomp. Trog. 27); Tryphon either was killed by Antiochos VII after he was taken in Apameia (Jos. *Ant.* 13. 224), or he committed suicide (Strab. 14. 5. 2); if Alexander Zabinas did not commit suicide with poison (Porphyrrios *FGrHist* 260 F32. 23), he was defeated and executed by Antiochos VIII (Jos. *Ant.* 13. 269; Just. *Epit.* 39. 2. 6). Themes of suicide and execution are prominent. The multiple versions of usurpers' deaths indicate that there may have been 'official' and alternative narratives.

Only Polybios, in his pro-Seleukid narrative, describes in detail the deaths of two usurpers. First, he writes that the Seleukid king demanded that Molon's corpse be impaled and displayed in the most conspicuous place (Pol. 5. 54. 6). Second, he notes that Achaïos' body was mutilated; his head was severed and sown into an ass' skin, and his body was impaled (Pol. 8. 21. 3).²⁸ Similar to the parade of Alexander Zabinas in chains through the camp of Antiochos VIII, these displays of defeat, humiliation, and desecration were intended both to deconstruct the former kings' kingship and to give a warning to other high power-holders in the kingdom.

Opposition to the king was not only dangerous for the usurper. After Molon's defeat, his brother Neolaos hastened to Persis in order to murder their mother and Molon's children. Afterwards Neolaos and Molon's brother Alexander committed suicide (Pol. 5. 54. 5). As Molon had apparently been aware of the consequences of his defeat, his brother was aware of the punishments that would be inflicted on

²⁸ See ch. 2.3.

their family. This also seems to have been the case for the closest friends of Molon, who committed suicide in their homes (Pol. 5. 54. 4). The account of the murder of Hermeias in the early reign of Antiochos III illustrates the potential fate of other family members. Polybios describes how the women and boys of Apameia stoned the wife and sons of the dead *ὁ ἐπὶ τῶν πραγμάτων* (Pol. 5. 56. 15). While the murder of Hermeias' family might serve its narrative to illustrate the public hate for the former chancellor, it nevertheless also displays the potential danger involved for Seleukid high officials who fell from grace. The Seleukid king, however, did not always hold the kin of rebels liable for their family members. Achaïos and his father Andromachos had been in the service of Seleukos II, and had been his friend in a period when their relative Alexander had seceded with Antiochos Hierax. Achaïos continued to be honoured under Seleukos III, and followed him on the campaign to Asia Minor. Nevertheless, after the death of Achaïos, it is doubtful that the family continued to be one of the closest friends whose daughters were married to the Seleukid kings.

The suicide of Molon and the murder of the usurper's family by his brother illustrates that they were aware of the punishments that would follow if they were captured by the king. Rebellion allowed for no compromises to be made, and both kings and usurpers were aware of this. The physical destruction of the usurpers and their followers displayed the negation of the usurper's right to power, and illustrated the monopoly of violence at the hands of the king. It was this monopoly that was narrated in the aftermath of at least two of these rebellions. While these forms of punishment left no alternative for the immediate followers of the usurpers, Seleukid reaction to other groups within usurpers' former regions was different.

Polybios describes how after the death of Molon, Antiochos III went to Seleukeia on the Tigris and restored order to the neighbouring satrapies. Hermeias, however, brought accusations against the Seleukeians. He apparently fined the city one thousand talents, sent the chief magistrates into exile, and destroyed many of the Seleukeians by mutilation, the sword, or the rack (Pol. 5. 54. 10). According to the Polybian narrative, it was the king who took matters into his own hands to pacify and quieten the Seleukeians. Moreover, he reduced the punishment for the people of Seleukeia's 'ignorance' (*ἄγνοια*) to only one hundred and fifty talents (Pol. 5. 54. 11–12). While Polybios blames these actions on the chancellor, it is possible

to compare Seleukeia with the capture of Sardeis a few years later. The taking of the lower city of Sardeis after a long siege (Pol. 7. 18. 9), the massacring (*φονεύοντες*) of the community, the setting of fires (*ἐμπιπρῶντες*) to the houses, and the robbing and booty (*ἄρπαξ καὶ ὠφέλεια*) might be connected to the necessities of warfare. Yet in the aftermath of Achaïos' death, troops were still billeted in the city, and it is striking that Antiochos III did not immediately enter Sardeis as a liberator. Only later did the king order the restoration of the gymnasium and promised to organize the reconstruction of the city (SEG 39. 1283–4).

In Seleukeia on the Tigris, one of the Seleukid capitals, the chancellor of Antiochos III accused and punished the collective of the city, symbolized through the punishment of the civic officials (and hence not just the garrison). These actions must be contrasted with the grants of the king. While it is not certain if the heavy burden on the people of Sardeis resulted from their allegiance with Achaïos or from the physical necessities of a siege, the benefactions of Antiochos III to Seleukeia should be read alongside the king's benefactions to Sardeis.²⁹ The punishment of Seleukeia is an indicator of good (or at least not hostile) relations between Molon and the city. Although Polybios only mentions Molon's quick successes and the slight resistance from the city, it is nevertheless likely that the citizens of Seleukeia did not oppose Molon's claims of kingship; perhaps they even supported it. In the immediate aftermath of the revolt, it was the capital that was punished by a Seleukid commander for the city's allegiance to a usurper. Moreover, if we follow Polybios' account on Seleukeia in hindsight of the inscriptions from Sardeis, it was only in the aftermath of the initial punishment that the royal performance changed. Antiochos III relieved the city of Seleukeia of its burdens, and it was the Seleukid king who ordered the reconstruction of the city of Sardeis. Initially punished, it was the king's eventual benefactions to his provincial capitals that initiated their renewed relationship with euergetic activities.

The Seleukid king was forgiving to his cities, but what about his troops? There is no evidence regarding how Antiochos III reacted to the troops of Achaïos. According to Polybios' account of Molon's usurpation, the king rebuked (*ἐπιτιμήσας*) Molon's troops at some

²⁹ See also Chrubasik 2012: 73–4.

length before giving them his right hand (δοὺς δεξιάν) and sending them back to Media to settle the affairs in his interest (Pol. 5. 54. 8). After the defection of two of Alexander Zabinas' commanders, Alexander pardoned them (Diod. Sic. 34/5. 22). The king might have had no interest in punishing his troops, who otherwise may have become disaffected. Moreover, his military strength also relied on their acceptance of him as their leader. This is illustrated in Demetrios II's behaviour after the deaths of Alexander Balas and Ptolemaios VI: shortly after his accession he penalized all those who had been hostile to him with outlandish punishments (τιμωρίαι ἐξηλλαγμέναι), including the people of Antiocheia (Diod. Sic. 33. 4. 2; Jos. *Ant.* 13. 135). Although the intensity of the punishment might be a creation of later historiography, it is difficult not to see the revolt of Tryphon and the taking of the city of Apameia as the immediate results of these measures. Demetrios II seems to have crossed a crucial line in the relationship between the king and his subjects: the support of the groups within his kingdom was not unquestioned. Also, Antiochos III had to deal with revolts of his troops when they opposed his measures.³⁰ While the revolt of troops did not lead to Antiochos III's fall, the pardon of Molon's troops nevertheless suggests that the king had to be forgiving in order to ensure continuous communication with the groups within his kingdom and to remain king.

The execution of the usurper, his associates, and family ensured the end of the revolt. The harsher the treatment of former close friends of the Seleukid king, the more likely it demonstrated the ultimate authority of the king and the dangers of opposition. While the public display was directed to all the audiences in the kingdom, one of the primary audiences were the king's friends, since it was from their ranks that usurpers emerged. Cities were punished too, although in the aftermath of the death of a usurper, the Seleukid king was generally benevolent. The royal performance of pardoning usurpers' troops and reconstructing usurpers' cities was necessary for the renewal of royal communication between kings and the groups within the kingdom. Only with the prospect of grants and benefaction did the cities and troops in the Seleukid kingdom remain in a continuous affirmative relationship with the king.

³⁰ See ch. 3.3d.

Seleukid reaction also resulted in the reinvention of Seleukid royal images. Polybios' account of Antiochos III enables us to interpret some of the king's measures as direct reactions to usurpers. The stronger emphasis on the Seleukid family cult (if not founded by Antiochos III), and the reaffirmation of Seleukid space through the invocation of a Seleukid past, are the most striking examples.³¹ Antiochos III placed himself within the lineage of Seleukid kings, hoping to create a strong Seleukid dynasty in his sphere of influence. The creation of honorific court titles can be interpreted as an attempt to bind the courtiers to a fixed hierarchy, and perhaps we also should place this development in the reign of Antiochos III if not Seleukos IV.³² Furthermore, the Seleukid kings, and Antiochos III in particular, strove to bind the Seleukid army closely to the Seleukid dynasty. Scholars have placed a strong emphasis on the loyalty of the Seleukid colonists and their role in the Seleukid army. Following this model, it was the split in the dynasty in the second century in particular which led to a change in the army's loyalty.³³ It also has long been suggested, however, that the connection between the military settlers and their recruitment in the army was far from secure.³⁴

Tryphon's success in Apameia and the revolt of the Kyrrhestai suggest that there are occasions when we should question the loyalty of these settlers to the Seleukid house. If, however, settlers did not form the core of the Seleukid army and were not loyal, one could begin to wonder whether the Seleukid army of the third century was indeed so different from that of the second century. Instead, we ought to see the events of the second century as an acceleration of a longer process. For the reign of Antiochos III, we know that the royal troops followed their leaders Molon and Achaïos against the troops of the Seleukid king, and that the group of the Kyrrhestai revolted because their commander was dismissed from office. The 'loyalty' of the Seleukid troops to their king was dependent on the performance of their king, and while troops were most likely loyal to the previous

³¹ See also the last pages of ch. 2.3.

³² Bickerman 1938: 41–6; Capdetrey 2007: 384–6; Dreyer 2011: 48–50. For the period of its establishment: Capdetrey 2007: 383; Ehling 2002: 44–5; Strootman 2011: 85–7. For the development in Ptolemaic Egypt: Mooren 1975: esp. 17–73; see also Mooren 1977.

³³ Most recently: Mittag 2008; see also Bar-Kochva 1976: 20–47.

³⁴ Bickerman 1938: 88; Robert 1937: 191–3; Cohen 1991: 41–50; Sekunda 1994: 13–14; cf. Capdetrey 2007: 158–9.

king (and thus it could be opportune to recall his achievements), perhaps we also should see 'the loyalty' of troops to the Seleukid family as a discourse, constructed by the Seleukid kings to display the unity of the kingdom. By calling his troops loyal to the royal house, as in Polybios' narrative before the battle of Raphia (Pol. 5. 83), Antiochos III not only hoped to encourage his army before battle, but he also advertised his model of loyal Seleukid troops who only followed the Seleukid kings.

The iconography of the Seleukid kings evolved in the context of the Seleukid usurpers. They were required to react to usurpations, and they adopted elements from the usurpers' iconography. For instance, the portrait of Antiochos III 'aged' during his reign. While this, of course, can be attributed to the king's natural aging, it is striking that Seleukos II portrayed himself in a relative ageless portrait throughout his reign.³⁵ On a few occasions the later Seleukid kings are shown with helmets and the energetic hair, which had been reintroduced by Timarchos, Alexander Balas, and Tryphon.³⁶ The stress on heavy physical features may have inspired Antiochos VIII's distinctive Grypus nose. Regardless of whether the beard of Demetrios II alluded to the beard of Zeus, a Parthian beard, or was simply a sign of age and maturity, the depiction of a Seleukid ruler with a fully grown beard was not usual.³⁷ One approach to interpreting this material would presumably stress the local initiatives of the mints and the stylistic changes over the course of the second century. This also is reflected in the adaption of certain Ptolemaic symbols, such as the *cornucopiae*. The adoption of usurpers' elements on a few occasions, such as occasional military features, energetic hair, and strong physical features, would support this argument. Another approach would argue that the change in the royal image was a reflection of the discourses of power in the Seleukid kingdom, and the adaptation of reintroduced usurpers' coin types in order to reinvent the authority of the Seleukid king. The occasional adoption of usurpers' imagery would illustrate the royal attempts to reincorporate energetic imagery in displays of Seleukid power.

³⁵ See ch. 2.2b with Fig. 2.4.

³⁶ e.g. Antiochos VII: SC 2061, 2081–95. Demetrios II: SC 2180, 2187, 2193. Antiochos VIII: SC 2297, 2298, 2302.

³⁷ See the discussion in section 0.3 of the Introduction. For Demetrios II: Mittag 2002; Lorber and Iossif 2009.

The most persuasive interpretation should lie somewhere in between. The adoption of energetic hair and heavy facial features could be a reference to usurpers' imagery. The curious beard of Demetrios II illustrates the king's interest in displaying himself differently from his predecessors (and, most importantly, from his first reign). At the same time, however, the adoption of occasional attributive elements, such as the helmet, on non-precious coinage in particular, could be connected to local initiatives. On the macro level, by comparing the Seleukid standard portrait under Seleukos IV and Antiochos IV with the portraits of Antiochos VII, Antiochos VIII, and beyond, it is impossible to deny the development of energetic expression in the royal portrait, and surely the political activities between two royal lines and usurpers had something to do with this.

The dynamics of the imagery and iconography on Seleukid coinage clearly illustrate that coinage mattered for both Seleukid kings and Seleukid usurpers. It serves as an indicator for the relations of power in the Seleukid kingdom. Instead of placing emphasis on the personal interests or religious convictions of the ruler,³⁸ the coinage was used to gain acceptance by the different groups in the Seleukid kingdom, most importantly the army. The variety in the iconography illustrates that 'Seleukid elements' were not necessarily perceived as the most persuasive. This is corroborated by Antiochos III's attempts to strengthen the royal line during his reign; the unchanging imagery of his coinage (apart from the age of the portrait) might further underline this. *Ex negativo* this also is illustrated by Demetrios I's choice of royal name, whereby he presumably strove to differentiate himself from Antiochos IV and Antiochos V. Also, the heavy emphasis on a new reverse type on his precious coinage may be connected with this differentiation. The Seleukid kings seem to have reinvented their royal *personae* as a reaction to usurpations, and to prevent further usurpers; the historical narrative illustrates their success.

4.2a Beyond Royal Reaction: Usurpers' Transformation into Tyrants

Section 4.2 so far has examined Seleukid reaction to usurpers in the immediate aftermath of the usurpers' defeat. Polybios' two accounts

³⁸ Cf. Lorber and Iossif 2009: 105–10.

on the restoration of Seleukid control illustrate that the death of the usurper was the most prominent element within a larger complex of events. It has been suggested that it is possible that the reinvention of the royal Seleukid *persona* also played a significant role. Another important element, however, has not been discussed so far and is difficult to assess: the branding of usurpers as bad rulers.

As outlined in the introduction, it was the final result of a struggle between two antagonists that allowed the construction of a story that involved a swift victory of a king over a usurper. The official historiography that followed portrayed a reconstructed image of a former king, now cast in the role of a usurper.³⁹ The circumstances of Hellenistic historiography make it very difficult to assess the attributions of usurpers' qualities after their death because this image was adopted and adapted by Polybios, Poseidonios, and subsequent writers. For example, the concept of Hellenistic *tryphē*, 'luxury', generally carries very negative connotations in Polybios, and is often associated with decadence. The *tryphē* of Ptolemaios VIII Euergetes II,⁴⁰ the excessive drinking of Eumenes I that led to his death (Ktesikles *FGrHist* 245 F2 *apud* Athen. 10. 445. c–d), and the sumptuous wedding of Antiochos III in Eubolia (Pol. 20. 8) are only a few examples. Polybios' depiction of Antiochos III as an *οἰνοπότης* in the same passage follows along the same lines. Similarly, the irrationality of Hellenistic rulers is at times depicted as rage (*λύσσα*), and forms a second *topos* in Hellenistic literature, particularly in Polybios' depiction of Philip V (most explicitly in Pol. 5. 11. 1–12), and in his account of Antiochos IV's behaviour, where Polybios called the king *Ἐπιμανής* instead of *Ἐπιφανής* (Pol. 26. 1a–1). A similar *topos* is the fear of the cities that emerged with the presence of kings during periods of violence (e.g. Liv. 33. 38. 9). Many of the *topoi* regarding the Hellenistic rulers, then, are not a unique phenomenon in accounts on usurpers, but appear in accounts of several Hellenistic kings.

Nevertheless, some aspects of particular *topoi* originated elsewhere.⁴¹ At the outset of his usurpation, Molon was able to gather a large army (*μεγάλη δύναμις*) and leave his satrapy. According to Polybios' narrative, the Seleukid generals sent against the usurper were

³⁹ See section 0.3 of the Introduction.

⁴⁰ On Ptolemaios VIII Euergetes II: Heinen 1983; Nadig 2007: 138–99.

⁴¹ The dynamics of this discourse on usurpers have been previously sketched in Chrubasik 2012.

'terror-struck' by Molon's approach (*καταπλεγέντες τὴν ἔφοδον*) and retreated to the towns (Pol. 5. 43. 6–8). The use of the participle of *καταπλήσσω* is presumably used to illustrate the power of Molon's approach.⁴² The Seleukid troops were overpowered and outnumbered. However, in the same dossier Polybios also writes that Molon:

worked upon the troops in his own satrapy until they were ready for anything, by the hopes of booty he held out and the fear which he instilled into their officers by producing forged and threatening letters from the king.⁴³

According to this account, Molon had tricked his troops. His soldiers followed him out of fear of the Seleukid king, generated by trickery and the hope of booty. The account of Molon's first military contact with the Seleukid forces is clear: Molon was able to engage such a large army that the Seleukid troops sent against him fled terror-struck, presumably without engaging in battle. Polybios' account continues with additional victories against high-powered Seleukid officials until Molon established himself in the centre of the kingdom (Pol. 5. 46. 6–48. 16). He had been able to gather a force large enough to engage the king's troops. Moreover, his troops did not defect in either of the battles with the king's army. This contradiction in the account of Molon's usurpation can be corroborated in a further episode.

After the death of the young Antiochos VI, Josephus describes Tryphon's communication with the army of the dead king:

He sent his friends and intimates to go among the soldiers, promising to give them large sums of money if they would elect him king. He pointed out that Demetrios had been made captive by the Parthians, and that if his brother Antiochos came to rule, he would make them suffer severely in taking revenge for their revolt.⁴⁴

⁴² See also Chrubasik 2012: 71 n.26.

⁴³ Pol. 5. 43. 5: . . . ἐτοίμους παρεσκευακώς πρὸς πᾶν τοὺς ἐκ τῆς ἰδίας σατραπείας ὄχλους διὰ τε τὰς ἐλπίδας τὰς ἐκ τῶν ὠφελειῶν καὶ τοὺς φόβους, οὓς ἐνειργάσατο τοῖς ἡγεμόσιν ἀνατακτικὰς καὶ ψευδεῖς εἰσφέρων ἐπιστολὰς παρὰ τοῦ βασιλέως.

⁴⁴ Jos. Ant. 13. 219: τοὺς δὲ φίλους καὶ τοὺς οἰκειοτάτους διέπεμπε πρὸς τοὺς στρατιώτας, ἐπαγγελλόμενος αὐτοῖς χρήματα πολλὰ δώσειν, εἰ βασιλεὺς χειροτονήσουσιν αὐτόν, Δημήτριον μὲν ὑπὸ Πάρθων αἰχμάλωτον γεγονέναι μηνύων, τὸν δ' ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ Ἀντίοχον παρελθόντα εἰς τὴν ἀρχὴν πολλὰ ποιήσειν αὐτοῖς κακὰ τῆς ἀποστάσεως ἀμυνόμενον.

According to Josephus' narrative, Tryphon first murdered the king in order to obtain the diadem. Second, he promised to bribe the troops, who would not have otherwise acclaimed him king. Finally, Tryphon threatened his troops with revenge by a relative of their former paymaster. The specific allusions to bribery and the threat of revenge are very similar to Polybios' description of Molon's revolt. Strikingly, it was only in Josephus' narrative that Tryphon was deserted by his troops and put to death soon after he had become king.⁴⁵ Josephus also writes that it was because of his soldiers' hatred (*μῖσος*) for Tryphon that they defected to Kleopatra Thea (Jos. *Ant.* 13. 221). The soldiers' opposition to Tryphon does not correspond with the account of his military successes nor with the relatively long duration of his reign. These *topoi* also can be found in the surviving accounts of other usurpers. For example, Appian writes that Demetrios I had murdered Timarchos who had badly (*πονηρῶς*) administered Babylonia. He also adds that it was for this reason that the Babylonians gave Demetrios I the name *sôtēr* (App. *Syr.* 47 [242]).

Achaios, too, was negatively portrayed. In 220, the Byzantines asked for his help, and his support 'greatly raised their spirits' (Pol. 4. 48. 4). In the summer of 218 the people of Pednelissos appealed to Achaios for aid, and the king campaigned south (5. 72. 1–3). However, in another episode from 218, Polybios characterizes Achaios differently. Following his return from a campaign to Pisidia and Pamphylia, Achaios 'continued to make war on Attalos, began to menace Prouusias, and was formidable and burdensome to all the ones who live on this side of the Tauros'.⁴⁶ Polybios also describes how in a previous campaign Attalos I had visited the cities of the Aiolis and they willingly joined his cause. Previously, they had joined Achaios 'out of fear' (*διὰ τὸν φόβον*; Pol. 5. 77. 2–4).

According to the literary tradition, Molon and Tryphon had to bribe their troops in order to gain their support. The successful general, giving booty to his army, became a briber who could only force his men to stay loyal to him. Moreover, Achaios was at the same time a *sôtēr* and a menace, while Timarchos had administered the province badly. Apart from individual successes, Molon, Tryphon, Timarchos, and Achaios were depicted as bad kings, even tyrants. Yet

⁴⁵ For the duration of his reign, see ch. 3.1c.

⁴⁶ Pol. 5. 77. 1: *Ἀχαιοὺς δὲ . . . ἐπολέμει μὲν Ἀττάλῳ συνεχῶς, ἀντετίεντο δὲ Προυσία, πᾶσι δ' ἦν φοβερὸς καὶ βαρὺς τοῖς ἐπὶ τάδε τοῦ Ταύρου κατοικοῦσι.*

where do these *topoi* come from? Some descriptions might have the same source as the negative accounts on the Hellenistic kings. It is, for example, difficult to assess whether Alexander Balas' weakness of character (*ἀσθένεια τῆς ψυχῆς*) was part of a negative discourse on kings in general or a negative discourse on usurpers (Diod. Sic. 33. 3). Nevertheless, we should assume that Seleukid court historiography was at least in part responsible for the accounts of Molon and Tryphon's bribery, and the account of the cruelty and malice of Hermeias can likewise be interpreted this way. These *topoi* had their origins in the Seleukid court historiography, and were constructed after the death of individuals whose power was too excessive.

Is it possible, however, that the discourse on 'bad' counter-kings originated away from the Seleukid court? The punishments of Sardeis and Seleukeia on the Tigris may indicate the cities' support for the usurper. But how did the local communities react in the immediate aftermath of a usurper's death? One interpretation would argue that the acclamation of Demetrios I as *sōtēr* when he entered Babylon served to avoid the punishment of the city and its magistrates after Molon's revolt. The attempt of the city of Antiocheia to acclaim Ptolemaios VI king can likewise be interpreted this way. The commanders Diodotos and Hierax opened the city gates and, perhaps in order to avoid punishment, bestowed honours on the Ptolemaic king by offering him the diadem (1 Makk. 11. 13; Jos. *Ant.* 13. 113–15). Yet did the cities express their 'fear' towards the monarch in order to renew their relationship with their new (and perhaps former) ruler?

Cities generally did not defame former rulers and the epigraphic documents do not extensively mention former monarchs. Strikingly, a letter from Ptolemaios II to Miletos, mentioning the 'harsh and oppressive taxes and tolls (*φόρων τε σκληρῶν καὶ χαλεπῶν... καὶ παραγωγίων*) which certain kings (*τινες τῶν βασιλέων*) had imposed', does not name the former kings (*I.Milet* 139, 5–7).⁴⁷ Only the Teians appear to have acted differently. In their second decree for Antiochos III and Laodike they use more nuanced language. They mention

⁴⁷ This sentence has caused wide scholarly debate, summarized in P. Herrmann's addendum to *I.Milet* 139 in *I.Milet* n139. It is uncertain who the kings in question were: Wörle 1977: 55 n. 70 (followed by Jones 1992: 97 n. 29). Seibert 1971 discusses the possibilities of Antigonos Monophtalmos, Lysimachos, and Demetrios Poliorketes. He ignores the fact, however, that the taxes might potentially be 'harsh and oppressive' only in a Ptolemaic discourse. Cf. Mastrocinque 1987–8: 80–2 who favours Demetrios Poliorketes.

‘alleviation of the heavy and harsh taxes (τῶν βαρέων καὶ σκληρῶν ἐκκούφισιν . . . τῶν συντάξεων)’, and indeed no king who had imposed the taxes is mentioned in the immediate context of the inscription (SEG 41. 1003 II, here ll. 51–2). The origins of taxation are mentioned in an earlier decree. Although it neutrally describes the tribute that the Teians used to pay to King Attalos I, notably the decree names the Attalid monarch twice (SEG 41. 1003 I 19–20; 34). What was the Teians’ intention? If the people of Teos wanted to emphasize the ‘oppression’ of Attalos I, they decided not to mention it explicitly. Similarly, if they decided to describe the former taxation system neutrally, there would not have been a need to mention Attalos twice in a distance of roughly fifteen lines. The reference to the Attalid king was intended to amplify Seleukid benefaction. At the same time, however, there appears to be no direct attempt to defame the Attalid king.

Locating the origins of a negative discourse on usurpers is difficult, and given the nature of the transmission of usurpers’ stories in our literary evidence, it is perhaps even impossible. Elements, such as the bribing of the troops, were *topoi* that were ascribed to the usurpers after their deaths. However, it cannot be attested if this was the result of Seleukid historiography, or created by the troops themselves. The same must be said about cities’ ‘fear’ of usurpers. While it might be attractive to connect the complaints of the cities to the defeat of the usurpers, this remains speculative, as cities also could be ‘afraid’ of kings in times of conquest.⁴⁸

All these considerations on the relationship between usurpers, the Seleukid kings, and the groups within the kingdom, however, transpose the discussion onto a different level: if the king’s friends were able to declare themselves kings and fight against the Seleukid king—even if only for a limited number of years—and if they were accepted in the cities and even supported by them, what does this mean for the Seleukid kingdom?

⁴⁸ See also Chrubasik 2012: 82.

Kings in the Seleukid Empire

A Story of Usurpation, Monarchy, and Power

‘and in any place where they fight, a man who knows how to drill men can always be King. We shall go to those parts and say to any King we find—“D’you want to vanquish your foes?” and we will show him how to drill men; for that we know better than anything else. Then we will subvert that King and seize his Throne and establish a Dy-nasty.’

R. Kipling, *The Man who would be King*, p. 252–3.

By discussing the impact of usurpers on the Seleukid empire, this book has largely been a political history. The picture it has created is one of high instability at the centre of Seleukid power with the Seleukid king constantly trying to hold the kingdom together. On the ground there were Seleukid officials, dynasts, and local power-holders. The presence of local power-holders should not be surprising since, to a certain degree, this is how many large territorial empires functioned: the Roman empire cooperated with the elites in its provinces; the Ottomans used local structures in its vast empire; even the early administration of the East India Company in Bengal and Hyderabad used local power-holders to establish and maintain territorial control without creating an enormous administrative apparatus.¹ This study has argued that rather than explaining dynasts’ presence as a historical accident, dynasts served specific local

¹ Briant 1982: 48 n. 3. Achaimenid Empire: e.g. Briant 2002: esp. 357–511; Briant 1984. Roman Asia Minor: e.g. Quaß 1993; Reitzenstein 2011 for a regional study. Ottoman Empire: e.g. Khouri 2006; Winter 2009 for a regional study. British India: e.g. Marshall 1987; Ray 1998.

purposes, and their presence and familiarity with local affairs should be understood as a central part of the structural stability within the empire. They were held in check by the presence of contingents of the royal army and the Seleukid high power-holders, and while they at times seceded, this did not threaten the structure of the Seleukid state; the *anabasis* of Antiochos III is perhaps the most famous case of a reaffirmation of Seleukid control over the local power-holders.

The king was aided by his most trusted friends, who became the high power-holders of the kingdom, and who, in his absence, controlled, king-like, the distant yet core arteries of the empire, such as the Lydian Plain, Babylonia, and Media. After Achaïos' death, the powers of Zeuxis were on the same level as those of his predecessor, suggesting that Antiochos III did not see a systemic problem in the powerful positions of his empire.² If the occasional secessions of the local power-holders are explained as 'normal' side-effects of empire, and if we should see the high power-holders as individuals who were personally chosen by the Seleukid king, then we should refrain from trying to locate the difficulties of the Seleukid empire in its administration and in the provinces, but rather in the very centre, that is, in Seleukid governance and its kingship.

5.1 POWER AND KINGSHIP IN THE SELEUKID EMPIRE

The core weakness of Seleukid kingship was the systemic possibility of tension between the Seleukid king and his most important power-holders. Practically speaking, the Seleukid king's most pressing concern was how to communicate his position as the supreme power-holder in his own kingdom.³ The king's precarious position was questioned from at least the middle of the third century. Initially Antiochos Hierax claimed a part of the kingdom for himself, while in the following period Seleukid high commanders with no or limited connections to the royal family were able to declare themselves king. Moreover, these later usurpers did not try to insert themselves into

² For a different interpretation of Zeuxis' position: Capdetrey 2007: 297 and 299, now followed by Plischke 2014: 280. See also ch. 2.3.

³ Cf. Briant 2002: 874.

the line of the Seleukid kings, and yet they were able to gather troops and engage the Seleukid army in battle. It is the usurpers who are indicative of the problem of kingship in the Seleukid empire: despite the Seleukid kings' attempts to create Seleukid identity for the Seleukid state,⁴ in the end these undertakings did not make the Seleukid king legitimate; he was—as outlined in the Introduction—generally accepted as king, but this acceptance was not a guarantee.⁵ The Seleukid kings had to constantly succeed and persuade their audiences of their successes. With this in mind let us return to the discussion at the beginning of the book: based on one of its entries on kingship in the *Suda* (B 147 A), H.-J. Gehrke has interpreted Hellenistic kingship using M. Weber's theory of charismatic rule, and has argued that the acquisition of charisma fostered Hellenistic kingship.⁶ Charisma could indeed qualify an individual to make himself worthy of the diadem, however, charisma did not *make* kings. In line with M. Weber's sociological presumption that the subject groups within the kingdoms had to believe in the king's leading position, this study has argued that the constant verbal and non-verbal communication between ruler and ruled assured the Seleukid king's 'social magic', the acceptance by the groups within the kingdom.⁷ The Seleukid king had to constantly compete for his position. He had to be the most successful, the best in every aspect, and this can be seen in the different *personae* of royal self-representation employed during the Hellenistic period. The display of vast palaces,⁸ excessive drinking (e.g. Pol. 20. 8), and royal games and feasts (e.g. Pol. 30. 25–26. 3),⁹ as well as the king's support of arts,¹⁰ hunting,¹¹ and euergetic activities,¹² created the framework to disseminate his royal communication to his troops, friends, cities, courtiers, and ambassadors, and thus be accepted as king by these agents

⁴ Now powerfully argued in Kosmin 2014, esp. in chs 1, 2, and 7.

⁵ Cf. Strootman 2014: 122–3 for a different view.

⁶ Gehrke 1982.

⁷ M. Weber 1980: 122 with Habermas 1987: 371–97 and Bourdieu 1991: 41–2; see also M. M. Austin 2003: 123.

⁸ There is little literary and archaeological evidence of the Seleukid palaces, but much has been recently collected in Strootman 2014: 66–74. See also Held 2002.

⁹ This all falls under the category of *tryphē*: see ch. 3.2c. Cf. Heinen 1983.

¹⁰ e.g. Erskine 1995.

¹¹ e.g. Plut. *Alex.* 40; Arr. *anab.* 4. 13. 2; Plut. *Dem.* 50. 8.

¹² e.g. Pol. 5. 88–90. 2; Gauthier 1985; Ma 2002. For a collection of benefactions: Bringmann and Steuben 1995.

within the kingdom. The king was king because he could communicate to his audiences that he performed these elements most successfully.

The fact that the Seleukid king had to prove himself capable of his position constantly and compete with other power-holders for the monopoly of power suggests that his position was not granted *a priori*, but that it had to be attained. In the ideal case, the royal princes (militarily trained from youth) took over the kingdom after they had been active in the service of their father, often as co-rulers. The pressure to succeed became particularly problematic, however, if the ruler was a child (as in the case of Antiochos, the son of Seleukos IV, and in the case of Antiochos V); if military success did not manifest itself (as in the case of Antiochos Hierax and perhaps Seleukos III); or in the aftermath of military defeats: Antiochos III did not 'trust' his troops after the defeat at Raphia, and it might not be coincidental that it was now that he 'remembered' Achaïos in Asia Minor who had already been king for three years (Pol. 5. 87. 1–2). The shortage of resources that prohibited the king's display of wealth could negate successful communication between troops and king (e.g. Antiochos III before his campaign against Molon; Pol. 5. 50. 1).

Nevertheless, communication between ruler and ruled was not restricted to the Seleukid king. High commanders, local power-holders, and influential friends took part in this communicative process. It not only provided the smooth running of Seleukid administration, but also gave individuals a certain degree of acceptance.¹³ In the Seleukid kingdom the Seleukid king was not the *only* actor, he hoped to remain the biggest player. This scenario in itself was not necessarily problematic, and can be similarly found in the highly aristocratic societies of the Achaimenid empire and later in the Ottoman state.¹⁴ Yet the threat from other high power-holders was too great. The Seleukid usurpations demonstrate that kingship in the Seleukid kingdom could be based on individual achievements and the display of power. Military success in particular could give military commanders royal virtue, and this inspired and/or persuaded their audiences to acclaim the individual king.¹⁵ The new kings displayed different elements of their royal image on their coinage or in their royal actions. They were accepted by the groups in their spheres of

¹³ For cities' additional imperial addressees: Ma 2002: 206–11.

¹⁴ Achaimenid empire: e.g. Briant 2002: 302–54. Ottoman empire: e.g. Karateke 2005.

¹⁵ Bickerman 1938: 12–13.

influence, and were addressed by the local communities as kings. The groups had no particular loyalty to the Seleukid kings and accepted other power-holders.¹⁶ Although the Seleukid kings were eventually able to subdue Molon, Achaïos, and Timarchos, they could not rely on their dynastic position.

The story of Achaïos' troops not wanting to march against their king *κατὰ φύσιν*, by nature (Pol. 5. 57. 6), is an often-quoted example of the importance of the relationship between the royal family and the troops.¹⁷ Yet the fact that these same troops wanted to acclaim Achaïos king already in 222 after he avenged the death of Seleukos III (Pol. 4. 48. 9–10) and celebrated his acclamation in 220 in Laodikeia on the Lykos (Pol. 5. 57. 5), might question the historical validity of this interpretation of the Polybian narrative. A similar example is the defection of Molon's troops as soon as they saw the Seleukid king (Pol. 5. 54. 1). Ultimately, the changeover of troops was not merely an issue between kings with different degrees of hereditary capital. This is already evident in the desertion of Demetrios Poliorketes' troops, who defected to Seleukos I (Plut. *Dem.* 49. 4). Troops defected when they thought it was opportune, which is also demonstrated in Polybios' own account of the battle of Raphia (Pol. 5. 85. 10). The personal encouragement of Ptolemaios IV drove his troops to victory. It not only inspired the Ptolemaic troops to achieve greater successes, but also resulted in desertion among the Seleukid ranks. Although the Seleukid troops resisted at first, and did not join the Ptolemaic troops, they quickly fled (*ταχέως ἐγκλίναντες*). Another example is the defection of Demetrios II's troops, most likely at the moment when Ptolemaios VIII Euergetes II was about to win the battle (*FGrHist* 260 F32. 21; Just. *Epit.* 39. 1. 1–4). It was not royal descent, but rather Seleukid manpower and the particular engagement of the Seleukid king (the sight of *a* king, instead of *the* king) that determined the destruction of the opponent's army. Polybios himself illustrates this in the speech of Epigenes, where he writes that Molon's revolt would shatter as soon as the 'king presented himself before the eyes of the people'; however, he also does not forget to add 'with a suitable force'.¹⁸

¹⁶ For a different view: Kosmin 2014: 242.

¹⁷ Gehrke 1982; M. M. Austin 1986; Mittag 2008.

¹⁸ Pol. 5. 41. 8: ... τοῦ βασιλέως παρόντος καὶ τοῖς πολλοῖς ἐν ὄψει γενομένου μετὰ συμμέτρον δυνάμεως, κτλ. Cf. Kosmin 2014: 177.

There could be more than one king in the Seleukid empire, and kings did not have to claim Seleukid ancestry in order to be accepted. Yet this does not mean that membership of the Seleukid family was irrelevant. If the Seleukid dynasty did not add any value to the Seleukid king's claim to kingship, there was no reason for Herakleides and Tryphon to promote Alexander Balas and Antiochos VI as Seleukid kings. Instead, they could have claimed the kingship immediately for themselves. Indeed, the role of the Seleukid king was a special one, there is no doubt. Yet where did the specificity of this particular kingship and its limits lie? Following Weber, Gehrke argued that it was the perpetuation of charisma through the dynastic secession that fostered hereditary charisma, as illustrated by the Seleukid succession.¹⁹ The perpetuation of any kind of rule in a dynasty is a natural process and requires no sociological explanation. It offers stability not only to the ruling family but also to the closest circle around the ruler and the state as a whole.²⁰

P. Kosmin has recently discussed the extensive undertakings by Antiochos I to create a Seleukid dynasty, and the Seleukid era and the royal city foundations, for instance, played a large role in the king's programme.²¹ He also convincingly demonstrates the influence of Seleukid court writings on the general Hellenistic and Roman understanding of Asia.²² If *I.Ilion* 32 should be dated to the reign of Antiochos I,²³ we would have an early reference to Antiochos I's *τῇμ πατρώϊαν ἀρχήν*, 'his ancestral kingdom' (l. 8), as well as to prayers to Apollo, *τῶι ἀρχηγῶι τοῦ γένους αὐτοῦ*, 'his (i.e. the king's) ancestor' (l. 26–7), both surely invoking a royal discourse. Under Seleukos II we find the king making reference to his *πρόγονοι*, his 'ancestors' (*I.Didyma* 493. 1–2), demonstrating one side of this discourse that seems to have existed under young kings in particular. This reference can be recalled in the later period in Polybios' account of the speeches of Antiochos III and Ptolemaios IV before the battle of Raphia (Pol. 5. 85. 1–13). The depiction of royal fathers on the coinage of Antiochos I and Antiochos II, and the uniformity of Seleukid coinage until the reign of Seleukos IV, further illustrates this emphasis placed on royal lineage. Antiochos III also expended considerable effort on fostering a Seleukid past in the places he

¹⁹ Gehrke 1982: 267.

²⁰ e.g. Karateke 2005: 17; M. Weber 1980: 16–17.

²¹ Kosmin 2014: 93–119.

²² Kosmin 2014: 37–53, 69–76, and 257–8.

²³ On the date of the text: Ma 2002: 254–9, also accepted by Kosmin 2014: 85–6.

conquered, and his promotion of a cult for his wife Laodike and his ancestors illustrates his interest in royal continuity and stability.²⁴ The image we obtain is one of constant refashioning, which underlines royal status and a royal dynasty.

Yet the Seleukid kings knew that the communicational value of dynastic descent was limited. Seleukos I attempted to enhance his son's position, not only by making him co-regent, but also by offering him the opportunity to achieve successful communication with the empire's audiences through military action and benefactions.²⁵ Dynastic succession could be peaceful when the sons had already been acting as kings before their fathers' death; this can be seen most strikingly at the accession of Seleukos IV. Yet grown sons who had been co-rulers during their father's lifetime were not always available, and these situations in particular demonstrate the limitations of royal descent. Even if younger, inexperienced Seleukid princes could be invested, we immediately see their efforts to retain their position. One of the young Antiochos III's first measures was to prepare for a war against Egypt (Pol. 5. 42. 5–6), and to arrange a sumptuous royal wedding (Pol. 5. 43. 3–4). Seleukos III similarly began a campaign in Asia Minor soon after his accession (Pol. 4. 48. 7). The necessity of successful performances is even more visible when the kings were too young to actively rule the kingdom. The guardians of Antiochos V and Antiochos VI were eager to display the kings' communicational efforts with their audiences. Antiochos V rode on a military campaign (1 Makk. 6. 28–31; Jos. *Ant.* 12. 367), while Antiochos VI made a treaty of friendship with Jonathan (1 Makk. 11. 57–9; Jos. *Ant.* 13. 145–6). Yet one should not forget that of these kings mentioned, only Antiochos III survived the first few years of his reign, a reign that began with three major revolts. While it was possible for a Seleukid prince to become a powerful king, dynastic descent was not strong enough to guarantee that either cities or troops would be loyal to them.

The dynastic policies of Seleukid kings were successful in so far as that their sons could become kings. But what was the political value of dynastic descent beyond their initial appointment? The usurpations of Alexander Balas and Alexander Zabinas are the most instructive

²⁴ For the state cult: Robert and Robert 1983: 163–8; Kuhrt and Sherwin-White 1993: 209–10; Ma 2002: 356; see also Gehrke 1982: 269–70; van Nuffelen 2004.

²⁵ See M. Weber 1980: 143.

examples. Alexander Balas' reference to his father Antiochos IV was supported by Herakleides, the former friend of Antiochos IV.²⁶ Herakleides had left the Seleukid court at the accession of Demetrios I. Given that Lysias—Antiochos V's chancellor—was murdered alongside the king, he and his brother Timarchos were surely not the only friends of the king to leave the court and the Seleukid kingdom (App. Syr. 47 [242]). Similarly, Meleager and Menestheos, the sons of Apollonios, had supported Demetrios I since their father had been in the service of Seleukos IV, but left the Seleukid kingdom during the reign of Antiochos IV (Pol. 31. 13. 3). The usurpers styled themselves as sons of kings to underline their relationship with their fathers and their fathers' friends. This was of particular importance since their fathers' friends were no longer members of the current Seleukid court. Tryphon's position made it unlikely for him to be of service to Demetrios II, and this was presumably one of the reasons why he promoted the acclamation of Antiochos VI. Both Alexander Balas and Alexander Zabinas were outsiders who did not have the same communicational successes that enabled Achaïos, Molon, and Timarchos' kingship. Their insertion into the line of the former kings, however, allowed them to renegotiate their relationship with the friends of their supposed fathers. It is through these examples that we can understand the possibilities and limits of the Seleukid royal family. Since friends of former kings could support claimants to the diadem, their insertion within the royal family enabled these pretenders to become king. Immediately after their accession, however, these usurpers had to prove that they could be successful, otherwise their initial supporters could abandon them.

The Seleukid kings promoted their family, divinized their royal ancestors, engraved royal names in the toponymy of the empire, and memorialized them in the public discourse.²⁷ Some of these efforts materialized in the discourse of our literary sources, and it is for this reason that Josephus writes that the Syrians in the early 120s appealed to Ptolemaios VIII to send someone from the *τὸ Σελεύκου γένος*, the 'House of Seleukos', to be their king (Jos. Ant. 13. 267). Beyond this language, however, the kings did not establish a hierarchical nobility that supported and strengthened a dynastic kingdom. The sheer creation of a noble pyramid, of a 'dynastic pact' between the kings

²⁶ See ch. 3.1b.

²⁷ e.g. Kosmin 2014: 183–221.

and his nobles, would not have guaranteed that a Seleukid prince would become a successful king,²⁸ yet, critically, it would have excluded other high power-holders from taking the diadem. With the lack of an aristocratic structure it was not φύσις, 'nature', or δίκαιον, 'justice', ἀλλὰ τοῖς δυναμένοις ἡγεῖσθαι στρατοπέδου καὶ χειρίζειν πράγματα νουνεχῶς, 'but the ability to lead an army and to manage the affairs with understanding', which persuaded the groups within the kingdom of the qualities of the individual and thus give βασιλεία (*Suda* B 147 A). More than any other type of Hellenistic kingship, kingship in the Seleukid empire remained in its Diadochic infancy, with a limited dynasty: a kingship of the individual. Indeed, one could argue that there was no kingship in the Seleukid empire; instead there were only kings.²⁹

It is an empire without a dynasty that witnessed the Seleukid colony of Apameia supporting the usurper Tryphon, the cities in Asia Minor calling on Achaïos for help, and the Seleukeians on the Tigris not opposing the usurpation of Molon. War and conflict ensued, and thus the limits of the Seleukid kingship translate immediately into the limits of the Seleukid empire, its administration, and its economy.

5.2 KINGS AND EMPIRES: ASSESSING THE SELEUKID STATE

The changeover of clay seals in Seleukeia on the Tigris from Antiochos IV to Timarchos and then to Demetrios I indicate that after Timarchos' usurpation, and the expulsion of a garrison (as under Molon), the daily workings of the empire were 'business as usual'.³⁰ The changeover from one monarch to another was nothing new on the coast of Asia Minor.³¹ However, if within one kingdom troops followed their high power-holders against Seleukid troops, and if cities and Seleukid colonies joined sides with military commanders (at times because they had been born in the area and at other times

²⁸ For the dynastic pact: Briant 2002: 316–54.

²⁹ Strootman 2014 and Plischke 2014 draw different conclusions.

³⁰ See Invernizzi 2004: 43–4 nos. Se 40–6.

³¹ See ch. 2.3.

for no apparent reason), what does this tell us about the Seleukid state? What, in fact, was 'business as usual'?

The first pages of this book already drew on the many different layers of the Seleukid administration, which ran the empire in the name of its king.³² The lack of a monopoly of power by the Seleukid dynasty, however, clearly illustrates the limits of Seleukid control. The flexible and dynamic nature of the Seleukid peripheries ensured smooth administration on the local level, but the relative independence of dynasts and local administrators' also necessitated a constant affirmation of Seleukid presence in order to maintain control over the regions' revenues.³³ For this, the Seleukid kings granted extensive offices to their trusted friends. If, however the Seleukid high power-holders only had limited loyalty to the Seleukid kings, these secessions could impede the imperial treasury and the Seleukid king's position within his own empire. Molon's taking of Babylonia in the late third century is perhaps indicative of these problems. Polybios writes that Antiochos III was not able to pay his soldiers, and it may have been Molon's usurpation that prevented the Seleukid centre from obtaining revenues from the eastern parts of the kingdom (Pol. 5. 50. 1–5). Therefore, while the structure of the Seleukid high power-holders could create a cohesive empire, and the narratives of empire generated a 'Seleukid' story, Seleukid Asia Minor is a litmus test to the limitations of the empire's workings.

Western Asia Minor only began to make contributions to the Seleukid royal coffers after Antiochos I and Antiochos II had established Seleukid control in the area, and when one of the kings exempted Erythrai from paying the *phoros* (*I.Erythrai* 31); large parts of coastal Karia and Lykia remained outside the Seleukid sphere until the early years of the second century. With the Ptolemaic resurgence under Ptolemaios III and the usurpation of Antiochos Hierax, Asia Minor was again outside Seleukid control, and while it is likely that local agents, such as Olympichos, or Lysias, son of Philomelos, continued to exact tribute in their territories even after this period, it is unlikely that this tribute made its way to Antiocheia on the Orontes before the retaking of Sardeis under Antiochos III in 213. Taxation was of course only one way of extracting revenue, and

³² See ch. 1.

³³ Capdetrey 2007: 417–18; cf. Aperghis 2004: 289–90.

irregular levies of money and troops could be advantageous;³⁴ however, the loss of Asia Minor between 246 and 213 and the late reconquest of western Asia Minor at the end of the third century also demonstrates how quickly these territories could be lost (and gained).³⁵

For second-century Judaea and the Levant the parameters are different, yet the picture is strikingly similar. While the Seleukid kings managed to retain a relationship with the people of Judaea, demonstrated most aptly in Antiochos VII's ability to receive Judaeans troops for his *anabasis*,³⁶ the presence of multiple competitors for kingship complicated the story. The agents of the Levant not only managed to ascertain exemptions from kings under strain, such as Demetrios I's exemption and privileges on festival days (1 Makk. 10. 33–45; Jos. *Ant.* 13. 48–57),³⁷ the multiple agents of different kings further question the smooth administration of the kingdom.³⁸ The second-century Levant also clearly demonstrates the impact of war on empire. Even if individual sites, such as Gindaros in northern Syria, suggest that not all communities were affected by the high power politics of the period,³⁹ for a large part of the second century, northern Syria and the Levant housed the rivalling armies of two contenders for the diadem. The power of the Makkabees was rising steadily; the cities and communities had to accept the levy of troops, plunder, and also the invasion of a Ptolemaic army. This image places particular stress on disruption, and perhaps neglects the continuity of Seleukid peace that is suggested by the archaeology of Gindaros. However, not all communities were free from danger: administrative complexes, such as at Tel Kedesh at the northern edge of the Hula basin, ceased to function after long-term uses, Berytos was sacked (Strab. 16. 2. 19), and Antiocheia itself was the centre of revolt on more than one occasion.⁴⁰

³⁴ Capdetrey 2007: 409, also 408–16.

³⁵ Cf. Rostovtzeff 1941: I 530–1; Ma 2002: 33–50.

³⁶ See ch. 3.3b. ³⁷ Capdetrey 2007: 417–22.

³⁸ See ch. 3.3 as well as ch. 1; also Ma 2000b: 85–104; cf. Aperghis 2004: 166–71.

³⁹ Kramer 2004: 263–76; Hannestad 2011.

⁴⁰ See ch. 3.3c. The emphasis in Hannestad 2011 on growth and continuity is important, but the presence of a large quantity of Seleukid coinage also surely reflects many wars. On Tel Kedesh: Herbert and Berlin 2003: 18–55; see also Ariel and Naveh 2003, and an updated summary in Berlin and Herbert 2013; on the destruction of its archive: Herbert and Berlin 2003: 54. The large number of possible parties who could have been responsible for the destruction is instructive for understanding the instability of the period.

This second-century image corroborates our limited knowledge of the Seleukid empire in the third century. The reigns of Seleukos II, Seleukos III, and the early reign of Antiochos III strongly suggest that these problems were not a phenomenon of the second century, but rather were apparent in the Seleukid kingdom from at least the period after the death of Antiochos II in 246. Thus, the picture we obtain from the evidence is disenchanting. The reigns of some Seleukid rulers, such as the reign of Antiochos III between c.213 and 197, allow us to ascertain how Seleukid administration and the economy of the empire operated. It is not possible, however, to transfer this approach to the Seleukid empire as a whole. If we are looking for a Seleukid kingdom that was a stable, vibrant economic and administrative space, then we must search beyond the period discussed in this book. But even if we do this, stability must be seen in relative terms. The period before the death of Antiochos II was the phase of the initial creation of the empire under its first three kings, and while the reigns of Antiochos III and Seleukos IV indicate stability, this latter period also witnessed two Syrian Wars, the affirmations and reaffirmations of Seleukid control, and the loss of Asia Minor.

Structural studies on the administration and economy of empires describe the state in its *longue durée* as an apolitical space, unchallenged by political affairs.⁴¹ The results of L. Capdetrey's important study, for example, remind the reader that it is impossible to think about the history of the Seleukid kingdom without thinking about its economy. While this is the strength of such an approach, it is also its greatest challenge. By analysing Seleukid usurpers and creating a picture of Seleukid history, this book has clearly illustrated that from the middle of the third century onwards the core of Seleukid government, that is, its kingship, was constantly challenged and that Seleukid authority was very fragile. It should be unsurprising then that 'exceptional' incomes of plunder and warfare form a far more regular source of wealth than supposed in Capdetrey's model, and perhaps the model of the war-waging king is more instructive.⁴² This is not the place to suggest a model of Seleukid economy, however, the material presented in this study questions whether the conclusions of

⁴¹ Capdetrey 2007; see similarly, e.g. Briant 2002, Aperghis 2004, and now Kosmin 2014.

⁴² Capdetrey 2007: 411–12; Aperghis 2004: 171–5. On economy and war: M. M. Austin 1986: 461–5; M. M. Austin 2003: 124–6.

synchronistic approaches enable us to fully realize the vitality of the Seleukid state, or if we also should take into account the consecutive warfare and structural weaknesses of the central authority in order to create a history of the Seleukid empire.

5.3 KINGS, EMPIRES, SELEUKIDS, AND BEYOND: AN EPILOGUE

The focus of this book has been largely on the political constellations of the Seleukid empire in the period between c.240 and 125. Since this study focuses on moments of political crisis, it lacks a discussion of those elements the Hellenistic historians did not find worth discussing, and that is questions of continuity, Seleukid administration, and its economy. Nevertheless, chapters 1–4 have illustrated that the image of a ‘strong’ Seleukid empire is not sustainable in terms of Seleukid politics, nor in administrative and economic terms.⁴³ Its emphasis on usurpers’ royal offers and their acceptance also casts a very different light on the success and persuasiveness of the Seleukid royal dynasty in terms of spatial ideology.⁴⁴

The Seleukid royal house prevailed for a period of *circa* two hundred and fifty years until Pompeius Magnus rejected the claims of the last kings in 63. Shortly before the death of Seleukos I, at the turn of the third century, the Seleukid kingdom was the largest empire of the Hellenistic world, and only the assassination of its first king and the defeat of Antiochos III by the Roman armies brought a halt to the empire’s expansion. The resurgence of the empire under Antiochos III and the display of Seleukid power in Baktria, Armenia, Asia Minor, and the Hellespont demonstrate the sheer manpower of the Seleukid army and the resources that were at the disposal of its kings. Yet one main element this image does not depict is that of a strong empire. Instead, it illustrates the performance of individual control and constant affirmation by the Seleukid kings. The structures of the empire and the political system of Seleukid monarchy were not stable.

⁴³ Political strength: Sherwin-White 1987: esp. 2–3; Kuhrt and Sherwin-White 1993. Economic and administrative strength: Capdetrey 2007: esp. 439–43.

⁴⁴ Kosmin 2014.

Despite Seleukid toponyms, there was no special relationship between the groups within the empire and the Seleukid kings that could give the members of the House of Seleukos a prerogative for kingship, and thus the Seleukid dynasty was not necessarily the most favourable within the Seleukid kingdom. If thinking about the Seleukid second century, it was neither the defeat at Magnesia nor the 'day of Eleusis' that defined the empire. On the contrary, in accordance with Kuhrt and Sherwin-White's thesis of similarity between the third and the second centuries (in contrast to their conclusion),⁴⁵ the Seleukid empire of the third century was just as weak as in the later period. Of course, the split in the Seleukid dynasty had an impact on the politics of the Seleukid kingdom, but it only accelerated a process that was rooted far deeper.

What does this mean? Does this reaction to the revisionist approach of Kuhrt and Sherwin-White, and Capdetrey lead us back to the Seleukid kingdom of Bevan, Will, Musti, and Wolski?⁴⁶ No, it does not. Various elements of the Seleukid state that have been examined by scholars of the twentieth century to describe the weakness of the empire—seceding dynasts, their coinages, and the strength of local power—have convincingly been reassessed as a mere part of Seleukid administration. They cannot serve to illustrate the weakness of the kingdom, nor, however, can they be used to show the empire's strength, as argued by Kuhrt and Sherwin-White. The weakness of the Seleukid state lies in its central core of government as outlined in the previous section, that is, its kingship.

This image of the Seleukid state and its kingship also has a considerable impact on our view about the Seleukid relationship with its Achaimenid predecessor, the empire that had ruled the Eastern Mediterranean until Alexander the Great's conquest.⁴⁷ One of the main tenets of 'new Seleukid history' was the interpretation of the Seleukid empire as a Near Eastern kingdom and the successor of the Achaimenid empire.⁴⁸ Of course, we see continuity: Polybios mentions the continuing existence of the irrigation canals, the *qanāts*

⁴⁵ Kuhrt and Sherwin-White 1993.

⁴⁶ Bevan 1902; Will 1979; Will 1982; Musti 1984; Wolski 1999.

⁴⁷ The *Achaemenid History* and the *Persika* series show the vibrancy of the field. For some of the major works: e.g. Briant 2002; Briant 1982; see also now Briant 2009b; Briant and Joannès 2006; Kuhrt 2007; Kuhrt 1995: 647–701; Wiesehöfer 2001. See also a bibliography: Weber and Wiesehöfer 1996.

⁴⁸ e.g. Briant 1990; Kuhrt and Sherwin-White 1993: 1; Aperghis 2004: 2.

(Pol. 10. 28. 1–4), and perhaps the Seleukid kings had supported their upkeep. Moreover, the royal road also appears to have been maintained.⁴⁹ As outlined in chapter 1, the Seleukid kings relied on local power-holders as semi-autonomous rulers, and this form of control was similar to that of the Achaimenid empire. All of these continuities, however, should not lead us to forget the distinct differences.⁵⁰ C. Tuplin has not only deconstructed some of the supposed continuities between the Achaimenid state and the Seleukid empire, such as Aperghis' interpretation of the Achaimenid 'head tax', he also has convincingly argued that the Seleukid abandonment of the territories from Central Anatolia to the Caucasus, and most importantly Elam and the Persis, highlight the discrepancy between these two empires within the same geographic space.⁵¹ Not only did the Seleukid kings send local dynasts into the former heartland of the Persian empire,⁵² they also never claimed any direct relationship with the Achaimenid kings.⁵³ The monetization of the Seleukid empire, the use of Greek in official communication, and the introduction of joint kingship, for example, further highlight these differences. Recent interpretations of the Antiochos Cylinder from the foundation of the Ezida temple in Borsippa dating to the reign of Antiochos I demonstrates too a very individual approach by the Seleukid kings regarding the temples of Babylonia.⁵⁴

Major differences also can be ascertained in the kingship of both empires.⁵⁵ More precisely, the relationship between the king and his ruling elite was so systemically different that it should allow us to put to rest the search for structural similarities between both empires. This cannot be the place to write a history of Achaimenid royal

⁴⁹ Qanāt: Briant 2001; Tuplin 2009: 111–12. Royal Road: *I.d'Iran et d'Asie centrale* 64–5 with bibliography (SEG 45. 1879–80); Callieri 1995; Bernard 1995: 73–82; see also Joannès 2006, and Kosmin 2014: 142–69.

⁵⁰ See Tuplin 2009; Tuplin 2014.

⁵¹ Tuplin 2009; cf. Aperghis 2004: 51–8.

⁵² See ch. 1.1b.

⁵³ See e.g. Kosmin 2014: 209–10 for the conscious renaming of Achaimenid settlements (and other monarchies' behaviour). It is not accidental that it was the surrounding dynasties (Armenia, Kappadokia, et al.) who 'remembered' their Achaimenid ancestors: Chrubasik forthcoming a.

⁵⁴ Stevens 2014; Kosmin 2014: 113–15. See, however, e.g. Briant 1982: 48 n. 3; see also Briant 1990; Kuhrt and Sherwin-White 1987; van der Spek 2006 who emphasize continuity with previous kings.

⁵⁵ Tuplin 2009, too, has highlighted some differences in the empires' respective kingships.

control, but highlighting a few elements will suffice for my argument: the strength and duration of the Achaimenid empire was based on the relationship between the Great King and his aristocracy, the '*ethno-classe dominante*'. The Great King was a member of the clan of Achaimenes, the Persian royal clan (Hdt. 1. 125), and many, if not most, of the aristocracy were Persian.⁵⁶ There were satraps (also important ones) who were not of Iranian background,⁵⁷ but the overwhelming presence of Iranian chief administrators in western Asia Minor and the other regions is striking. The political interaction between the Great King and his Faithful, as well as the aristocratic structure of the Persian elite, created a reciprocal relationship which strengthened both the royal family as well as the nobles, and thus also the empire. None of the revolts over the 220 years of the kingdom's existence threatened the social order of the empire, and even in the case of a successful usurpation, as under Dareios I, the new king inscribed himself into the heritage of Cyrus the Great.⁵⁸ We should understand this imperial message of Dareios I after his accession as a communicative offer to the imperial elite, stating publicly that nothing had changed. The dynasty prevailed and so did the elite. Regardless of the fact that Xenophon's *Cyropaideia* is a constructed narrative, it is plausible that Chrysantas' speech nevertheless gives us a flavour of a general perception of the dynamics of the Persian court when Xenophon writes that 'Cyrus will never be able to employ us for his own advantage without it also being for our own, since our interests are the same and our enemies are the same.'⁵⁹

These interests were also deeply economic, and they translated directly into the administration of the empire. The estates of the fifth-century satrap of Egypt Arshama, the '*bar beyta*', the 'prince of the house', were intertwined with the imperial landscape of the Achaimenid state (*TADAE* I A6. 9). A series of letters during a revolt in Egypt illustrate the satrap's interest in guarding and increasing his properties in Egypt while he was at the king's court (*TADAE* I A6. 10; see also A6. 7). In c.403, the satrap Arshama appears again as a

⁵⁶ Briant 2002: 316–54; Briant 1988: esp. 137–8.

⁵⁷ See e.g. the local satrap of Samaria: Jos. *Ant.* 11. 302. On the Hekatomnids of Karia: Chrubasik forthcoming a.

⁵⁸ e.g. Briant 2002: 107–38.

⁵⁹ Xen. *Cyr.* 8. 1. 5: ... ὅτι οὐ μὴ δυνήσεται Κῦρος εὐρεῖν ὃ τι αὐτῷ μὲν ἐπ' ἀγαθῷ χρήσεται, ἡμῖν δὲ οὐ, ἐπειπερ τὰ γε αὐτὰ ἡμῖν συμφέρεи καὶ οἱ αὐτοὶ εἰσιν ἡμῖν πολέμιοι; Briant 2002: 316–54, esp. 352–4.

landholder in Babylonia (Hilprecht *BE* 9.1), perhaps demonstrating how a royal servant could expropriate a large Babylonian firm, and add it to his own estates.⁶⁰ For the Achaimenid noble Arshama, a revolt in his satrapy would have meant a deep economic loss to his estates in the remaining parts of the empire. Achaimenid bureaucracy was deeply entrenched at the local level, and it was effective. Like the Arshama dossier, the documents from Baktria, dated to the last decades of the Achaimenid empire, suggest the same high level of administration and constant contact between the local administrators, their superiors, and the Persian court on the fringes of the empire, and the clearest attestation of Achaimenid administration presumably can be drawn from the wealth of material from the Persepolis fortification archive.⁶¹ These differences in administration might be deceptive since we do not have these types of evidence (parchment accounts and tongue-shaped clay tablets) for the Seleukid period, yet the involvement of Arshama and the nobles' economic interest in the imperial enterprise is different from that of the Seleukid administrators, mainly because this class of royal nobles appears to be missing in the Seleukid state. Of course, Seleukid royal *philoï* owned land, and the estates of Aristodikides of Assos (*RC* 13 and 10–12) and Achaïos the Elder (*I.Laodikeia* 1) are two prominent examples. Yet even if the latter had been a landowner near the future Laodikeia on the Lykos, he was not a high power-holder and does not seem to have had administrative functions beyond his estates.

Even if this is a roughly sketched image, the differences to its Seleukid successor presented in this book are remarkable.⁶² The relationship between the Seleukid king and his friends was systemically different than between the Great King and his Faithful. The Seleukid king did not obtain the same position for himself and his family as the Persian Great King had, and thus the period of Seleukid stability was very short indeed. In terms of socio-political stability, the Seleukid dynasty was not comparable to the royal clan of

⁶⁰ For a translation of the document: Kohler and Ungnad 1911: 33–4 no. 50. See Stolper 1985: 23; Tuplin 2014: 30–1.

⁶¹ Baktrian letters: Naveh and Shaked 2012; Shaked 2004. Achaimenid control and exploitation: Briant 1982: 175–225. On the Persepolis archive: e.g. Briant, Henkelman, and Stolper 2008; Henkelman 2008: 65–179. On the archive at Daskyleion: Kaptan 2002.

⁶² Cf. Sherwin-White 1987: 2–4.

Achaimenes, and a nobility linked to the royal family at the centre was never established. Instead, the Seleukid kingdom was based on a very different idea of monarchy, a kingship of warped Homeric ideals that focused on *aretē*, the excellence of the individual, yet did not leave room for a strong nobility. This kingship emerged under Alexander the Great, and it manifested itself in the acclamation of the kings less than twenty years after his death in Babylon.⁶³

In the Seleukid empire, individuals could become kings without needing to become the Seleukid king. With his martial conquest of the Persian Empire, Alexander the Great had destroyed this key component of Achaimenid success. Without the Achaimenid *ethno-classe dominante* and the introduction of individual success as a qualifying element for kingship during the Successor period, the possibility of individuals becoming king was too great. Alexander was the heir of an empire that had once been Persian, but it is doubtful that his rupture of the structural core of governance in the region made him '*le dernier des Achéménides*'.⁶⁴ The Seleukids attempted to curb these factors and the dynastic measures of Antiochos III are the most striking indicator; yet the dynasty was too weak. Even if the adaptation of local practices suggests continuity, the Seleukid kings were not the successors of the Achaimenid empire. The Seleukid kings were kings of the eastern parts of the Hellenistic world, and for a long period of time they managed to maintain this central position of authority. Others, however, could also be king and their authority could be accepted to the same degree as that of the Seleukid ruler.

⁶³ See Lane Fox 2007; Tuplin 2009. Wiemer 2007 focuses on the last year of Alexander in Babylon and reaches the same conclusions.

⁶⁴ The phrase is P. Briant's: e.g. Briant 1982: 330; Briant 2009a.

Appendices

APPENDIX A

The Meydancikkale Hoard and the Recovery of Rough Kilikia under Seleukos II

The rich hoard with 5,215 silver pieces at the site of Meydancikkale was discovered in 1980, and published by A. Davesne and G. Le Rider in 1989. The site is located in Kilikia Tracheia, fourteen kilometres as the crow flies high above the Mediterranean coast. It is roughly twenty kilometres north-east of the coastal city of Kelenderis, and fifty kilometres east of Seleukeia on the Kalykadnos.¹ Some figures are necessary in order to place the find into an appropriate context. The largest groups of coins are 2,738 pieces in the name of Alexander the Great, and 2,158 pieces in the name of the Ptolemaic kings. The next group consists of 261 pieces from the Seleukid kings, from which sixty-one silver denominations are in the name of Seleukos II.² Thirty-four apparently fresh coins of these sixty-one silver pieces come from the same 'Uncertain Mint' 36, and Georges Le Rider suggested that they might have been minted close to the site.³ This would influence the picture of the Kilikian coast, and suggest that with a mint in the middle of Kilikia Trachea, Seleukos II was able to recover the region from Ptolemaic control, and re-established a Seleukid foothold in the region.

While this may have happened, I will argue in the following that this interpretation is not the most plausible one. Porphyrios' account on Antiochos III's naval conquest (*FGrHist* 260 F 46) is conflicting: the late Roman author describes Antiochos III's successes in recovering the southern coast of Asia Minor. Much of the Ptolemaic presence in Kilikia can be corroborated with epigraphic evidence up to a certain point (though critically not with a firm *terminus post quem*).⁴ Of course, Porphyrios' account may not be

¹ Location: Davesne and Le Rider 1989: 5. Content: Davesne and Le Rider 1989: 15–18.

² Alexandrians: Davesne and Le Rider 1989: 240. Ptolemaic coins: Davesne and Le Rider 1989: 24 no. 7. Seleukid coins: Davesne and Le Rider 1989: 23 no. 5. Seleukos II: Davesne and Le Rider 1989: 230.

³ The name 'Uncertain Mint' 36 was attributed by the editors of SC. Davesne and Le Rider 1989: 330–1; see also the lemma for 'Uncertain Mint' 36 SC 676–7.

⁴ Ptolemaic presence in Kilikia: Nagidos: a certain Apollodoros dedicated a gymnasium, which he built on a kleros in the nome of Arsinoe, to either Ptolemaios II or Ptolemaios III. The property seems to have been in decay though in 232/1: Guéraud 1931–2: 20–7 no. 8; see also Jones and Habicht 1989: 332. Arsinoe (east of

reliable, and in many respects it is not. If, however, for the sake of argument, we accept that the taken cities roughly correspond to Ptolemaic-controlled cities conquered by Antiochos III, we must assume that these cities became Ptolemaic again at some point after Seleukos II's supposed reconquest (unless of course Porphyrios did not know what he was compiling or writing about). One should acknowledge that this is at least conceivable, and there is evidence of Ptolemaic campaigns in the 230s, for example, on the north-western coast of Asia Minor.⁵ These at least seemingly conflicting stories warrant further considerations, in particular, since the mint of Seleukos II in Rough Kilikia is far from certain.

A. Houghton and C. Lorber pointed out that the dotted border on the coins from 'Uncertain Mint' 36 is unusual for the region. There is a series from 'Uncertain Mint' 45 (SC 744) that seems to imitate the coins from 'Uncertain Mint' 36. Houghton and Lorber place 'Uncertain Mint' 45 firmly in Mesopotamia, and they further argue that similar monograms may link 'Uncertain Mint' 36 with further mints that are located in Mesopotamia: 'Uncertain Mints' 44 (as well as 'Uncertain Mint' 31 under Antiochos II).⁶ This all casts doubts on the Kilikian origin of 'Uncertain Mint' 36. At the time of the publication of SC I, it was the similarities to the dies from Sardeis and to 'Uncertain Mint' 37 (then said to be located on the Kilikian coast) that made the origin in Asia Minor a possibility. Since following the publication of SC II 'Uncertain Mint' 37 is now also placed by Houghton and Lorber in Mesopotamia and not on the Kilikian coast,⁷ the connection of 'Uncertain Mint' 36 with Rough Kilikia is untenable.⁸ A lack of issues from 'Uncertain Mint 36' in the 'Seleukos III Hoard' (lemma for SC Ad148) might exclude Mesopotamia as a mint, and it is possible that instead we should locate the mint in plain Kilikia (perhaps Tarsos). Nevertheless, no conclusions

Anemurion): the text was published by Jones and Habicht 1989; the city is also mentioned in Strabo 14. 5. 3. For the future of this settlement and its conflict with Nagidos: Chaniotis 1993. Charadros: a dedication from Cyprus (*SEG* 20. 293) mentions a commander left in charge of Charadros who was from Arsinoe in Pamphylia (l. 4–6), surely a Ptolemaic commander, and possibly from the reign of Ptolemaios III, if the dating of Mitford 1961: 136 is correct. Aphrodisias, Soloi, Zephyrion, Mallos, Anemurion, Selinous, and Korakesion are mentioned in Porphyrios as cities taken by Antiochos III in 197: *FGrHist* 260 F 46. For Tarsos and the region around it see ch. 2.1c, n. 64. The geography seems to suggest that Porphyrios might have identified Korykos with the Pamphylian Korykos mentioned in Strabo 14. 4. 1. Even though it is a small town (πολίχνη) between Phaselis and Attaleia that seems to have been enlarged only under the Attalids, its identification might fit better with the geography of his account: see Adak 2007: 273 n. 81.

⁵ See ch. 2.1b, n. 59.

⁶ See the lemma for 'Uncertain Mint' 36 SC 676–7.

⁷ 'Uncertain Mint' 37: see the lemma in SC ii for SC Ad159–163A on pp. 666–8.

⁸ One exemplar of a dotted border at Tarsos (SC 678) might support the Kilikian case.

regarding Seleukid Kilikia Tracheia can be made, since there is no evidence of Seleukid mints.

If we locate 'Uncertain Mint' 36 further east, and interpret the fresh pieces as booty (as seen as a possibility by Houghton and Lorber),⁹ the picture becomes more persuasive: Seleukos II might have recovered the area around Tarsos, and the Ptolemaic possession of Mallos until 197 in Porphyrios' account might be an exaggeration. Seleukos II also may have tried to extend his influence in the plain.¹⁰ Yet the coastline of Rough Kilikia, including Seleukeia on the Kalykadnos, is likely to have remained in Ptolemaic hands with a Ptolemaic outpost at Meydancikkale, and was only recovered with the naval campaign of Antiochos III in 197.

⁹ See the lemma for SC 676–7.

¹⁰ Le Rider 1999: 129–31.

APPENDIX B

Antiochos Hierax and the City of Magnesia

If any historicity can be placed on Porphyrios' episode, Antiochos Hierax's retreat to Magnesia might give insights into the geopolitical landscape of western Asia Minor during the period of Antiochos Hierax's reign. Nevertheless, it is difficult to ascertain which Magnesia Antiochos Hierax turned to. Magnesia on the Maiander was by far the more prosperous city, and perhaps it was only a city of this size that did not require a further explanation of its position.¹ Yet also the lesser Magnesia under Mt. Sipylus became well known in the later Roman period, and in particular the Roman victory at the Battle of Magnesia in 189 catapulted the small settlement onto the international scene; due to this defeat the city was also connected to the Seleukid kings.

While it is not possible to give a definitive answer to which of the two cities he retreated to, two scenarios can be imagined. In the first scenario, Antiochos Hierax fled to Magnesia on the Maiander. He purposely did not escape to Laodikeia on the Lykos, Antiocheia, Seleukeia/Tralleis, or the fortress of Alinda, either because the cities shut their gates or because Magnesia offered him more. But what did Magnesia offer the king? Its location was not particularly secure, and hardly a fortress. Yet Magnesia was very close to the area of Ptolemaic control on the road towards Priene and eventually Ephesos, both garrisoned with Ptolemaic soldiers. It was in Magnesia where supposedly Ptolemaios III supplied Antiochos Hierax with troops or supplies.² If the Ptolemaic troops were a decisive factor, then the retreat to Magnesia would have been understandable. The evidence suggests that soon after reaching Magnesia, Hierax fought a decisive victory, but the enemy is not mentioned. Who was it? The Galatians would have been very strong and the situation in Asia Minor very unstable if the Galatians could advance all the way down the Maiander valley to Magnesia. Nevertheless, it was presumably in the Maiander valley where the people of Priene defended their interests against Galatian tribes, and it was only with the building of the fortress of Eumeneia that the Maiander valley was guarded from intrusions

¹ The prominence of Magnesia on the Maiander also has led scholarship in general to associate the city with Hierax's retreat: e.g. Ma 2002: 45.

² One should note that the interpretation of this passage is entirely dependent on the Latin (*auxiliares accipiens*) edition of the Armenian chronicles by Schoene and Petermann 1875: 251–2, and its translation by Jacoby in *FrGHist* 260 F32. 8.

East.³ It is difficult to imagine which other enemies Antiochos Hierax could have fought in the area. Further evidence for Antiochos Hierax's control over the Maiander valley is lacking, with the exception of three connected coin issues, which also could have come from any other place (SC 909–12). There is one further argument which makes Magnesia on the Maiander in my opinion a less likely option. Although an argument *ex silentio*, most striking is the lack of any mention of Antiochos Hierax in the dossier of the Karian dynast Olympichos, thus calling into question his proximity to Alinda and the dynast's sphere of influence.⁴ Despite the dossier of Labraunda's lack of material for the period between c.240 and c.230, the later documents illustrate the changes in power during this period quite well. Thus, while it is possible that Hierax retreated to Magnesia on the Maiander, the absence of Antiochos Hierax in these documents makes evidence of a permanent presence in the Maiander valley at the very least uncertain.

Magnesia under Sipylos on the other hand might offer a more plausible solution for the enemy mentioned in Porphyrios, although this solution is not entirely convincing either. In this scenario, Antiochos Hierax, attacked by a Galatian tribe and betrayed by his courtiers, made his way through the Hermos valley. The Seleukid colony of Magnesia was probably founded by Antiochos I, and it was located on the northern slope of Mount Sipylos.⁵ A treaty of *sympoliteia* between Smyrna and Magnesia under Sipylos from the early years of Seleukos II's reign describes the large body of troops stationed in Magnesia (*I.Smyrna* 573. 35). Antiochos Hierax is not mentioned in the inscription. Therefore, the document presumably should date to the period before his appointment, unless the omission of Antiochos Hierax was a conscious choice. It is possible that the Smyrneians used the absence of the Seleukid king to extend their sphere of influence.⁶ Strikingly, the treaty from the coastal city of Smyrna evokes Seleukos II and not Ptolemaios III, who controlled a large number of the coastal cities, and clearly indicates that although Seleukid dominance was declining, the area was not under Ptolemaic influence. If the treaty were to be dated to the later period when Antiochos Hierax was already king, it is possible that the people of Smyrna actively tried to diminish the influence of Hierax by bringing the military settlers of Magnesia under their control.

Hierax, on his retreat into the Hermos valley, did not go to Sardeis but instead went to Magnesia under Sipylos for strategic reasons. The fortress of

³ Priene: e.g. *I.Priene*² 28; Eumeneia: Thonemann 2011: 147 and 170–7; see also ch. 2.1.

⁴ On Olympichos: see ch. 1.3.

⁵ Foundation of Magnesia: *I.Smyrna* 573. 100–1. The colonists still lived in Magnesia when the inscription was published. For the mention of colonists, see e.g. ll. 14, 22, and throughout. The fortress could secure the surrounding territories, see ll. 94–5.

⁶ See Ma 2002: 49–50.

Magnesia overlooked the Hermos valley, and was a safe retreat. The soldiers could have joined him if they were not already under his standard since his command of the campaigns against Ptolemaios III. Moreover, other Seleukid colonies, such as Thyateira, were in the area and might have been able to provide Antiochos with troops.⁷ In the Hermos valley, it is possible that Antiochos Hierax fought a battle against Galatian tribes or Attalid troops. Yet if for strategic reasons Magnesia under Sipylos was initially more attractive, there is no evidence of Ptolemaic activity on the Aiolian coast. If indeed Ptolemaic support was real in terms of men, not money, it is difficult to imagine how Ptolemaic support should have reached Hierax. A later parallel, however, is instructive: according to Polybios' narrative, the rescue of the usurper Achaïos out of the citadel of Sardeis by Cretans who had been instructed by the Ptolemaic court (Pol. 8. 15–20) indicates that at times Ptolemaic influence could extend into the Hermos valley. Beyond small rescue missions, Ptolemaic influence could be more substantial. When the Seleukid soldier Legoras wanted to keep the attack on Sardeis a secret, he told his troops that they should prepare against the Aitolians (clearly sent by the Ptolemaic king), who planned to enter the city to relieve the besieged (Pol. 7. 16. 7). While Legoras may have invented these soldiers,⁸ in order for the narrative to make sense, the argument necessitates that it was at least possible for enemy soldiers to reach Sardeis even if Ptolemaic troops apparently did not hold parts of the Aiolian coast. Therefore, it is at least possible that Ptolemaic relief troops could have reached Antiochos Hierax in Magnesia under Mt Sipylos, far closer to the coast than the city of Sardeis.

Most of the reconstructions regarding the reign of Antiochos Hierax are hypothetical, and a retreat to the city of Artemis Leukophrynē in the plains of the Maiander is possible. Yet evidence of Hierax's control in the Maiander valley is absent, and it is difficult to see how his kingship reached that far south. Therefore, given the activities of Antiochos Hierax in north-western Asia Minor, I would argue that it is more plausible to attribute the Magnesia of his retreat to the settlement in the Hermos valley.

⁷ For Thyateira: *OGIS* 211; see also the collection in Cohen 1995: 238–42.

⁸ See ch. 2.1c.

APPENDIX C

Alexander Balas and the Eagle Coinage

Scholarship has long suggested that the Ptolemaic eagle on the reverse of Alexander Balas' coinage indicates a close relationship between the Ptolemaic king and Alexander Balas either on political or economic grounds.¹ Initial Seleukid minting activity in Koilē Syria and Phoenicia was limited. Antiochos III apparently did not strike silver coinages in the region, and his successors seem to have only minted coins in Ptolemais. An apparently small series from Seleukos IV, a larger series from Antiochos IV, and another small series from Demetrios I survive.² In an analysis of the hoard evidence from the region, G. Le Rider has demonstrated that Ptolemaic coinage on the Phoenician standard was predominant in the hoards up to the 140s, and the hoarding of Phoenician standard coinage presumably indicates local demand. Strikingly, the hoards outside the region rarely show coins on the Phoenician standard.³ Alexander Balas' Phoenician standard issues therefore should be interpreted as a continuation of Antiochos V's initiative to strike these issues in the region. The coinage responded to local demand by using the Ptolemaic eagle on the reverse in a number of mints, and would be continued by his successors until the Seleukid kings lost control over the region.⁴ In light of the local prominence of the Phoenician standard coinage,

¹ Most recently Ehling 2008: 155–6 has underlined this interpretation. With references to older literature on 156 n. 382, he translates the eagle coins as an indicator of the economic relations between Ptolemaic Egypt and Alexander Balas' territory. Cf. Mittag 2002: 392–3; Mørkholm 1967: 78–9.

² On monetary policy in this period: Houghton 2004. Seleukos IV: Le Rider 1992b: 39–40. Antiochos IV (tetradrachms only): Mørkholm 1963: 44–56. Demetrios I: Houghton 1992a.

³ Le Rider 1995: 395–6. *CH* 9 and 10, published after this study, contain no hoards that contradict Le Rider's analysis.

⁴ Antiochos V: SC 1583. Le Rider 1995: 394; 396–7 (with reference to Le Rider 1985: 76). For Mørkholm 1967: 78–9 these issues were struck under Alexander Balas. However, Le Rider has shown that this interpretation is unlikely. Duration: the Seleukid eagle coinage continued until the reign of Antiochos IX: Le Rider 1995: 396. For the eagle coinage: SC 1583 (Antiochos V), 1824, 1830–2, 1835–7, 1842 (Alexander Balas), 1952, 1954–6, 1959–67, 2188, 2195–7, 2203–6 (Demetrios II, both reigns), 2020, 2022, 2026 (Antiochos VI), 2042–3, 2045–7 (Tryphon), 2102–3, 2109–11, 2116–17, 2124 (Antiochos VII), 2253–6 (Alexander Zabinas), 2269, 2331–2, 2337–41 (Antiochos VIII), 2391–2, 2395–6 (Antiochos IX).



Fig. C.1 Tetradrachm of Alexander Balas, mint Sidon, 150–145 BCE, Spaer 1989: 71. Courtesy of Arthur Houghton.

the use of the Ptolemaic eagle on the coins therefore must be detached from its ‘Ptolemaic’ significance, and instead should be read as a marker of weight standard in order to distinguish it from the tetradrachms on the Attic standard that were also struck at the mints. Evidence of the eagle on the reverse of the coinage throughout the period of Seleukid control corroborates this argument.⁵ If, however, the eagle coinage is detached from its Ptolemaic semantics, it cannot be used to interpret the political relationship between Alexander Balas and Ptolemaios VI. The coins were for local use in a region that had used this standard for a considerable period of time.

⁵ A potential Ptolemaic issue minted during the reign of Alexander Balas also cannot be attributed with certainty: Lorber 2007 has outlined the limits of placing Ptolemaic coinage in the Levant. But even if the coinage was minted in the Levant, Hazzard 1995: 417 n. 7 and Hazzard 1999: 150 has argued that the tetradrachm attributed to Ptolemaios VI at Ptolemais (Svoronos 1486 pl. 48, 19–20) should be placed in the period of Ptolemaios VI’s invasion; see also Le Rider 1995: 397.

APPENDIX D

Usurpers and the Senate of Rome

The defeats of the Hellenistic monarchs by the Roman armies at Magnesia and Pydna fundamentally altered the political landscape of the Hellenistic east. From at least the day of Eleusis in July 168 (Pol. 29. 27. 1–13), even in the Seleukid empire, Roman power could no longer be doubted. Acknowledgement of Roman supremacy in the geographic sphere of the eastern Mediterranean is illustrated by the numerous envoys from the *poleis* and kingdoms of the Greek east, as well as in the sending of royal hostages to Rome itself.¹ As has been outlined in chapter 3, Rome was not only the initial cause of the split in the Seleukid dynasty, but also many of the Seleukid pretenders embarked on embassies to Rome seeking acceptance.

The embassies of Timarchos and Alexander Balas to Rome are connected in two respects. First, both usurpers attempted to be acknowledged as kings in the Seleukid east during the reign of Demetrios I, who, according to the Roman senate, never should have left Italy. Second, both embassies were headed by former friends of Antiochos IV. According to Polybios, the Romans did not want Demetrios I to leave Rome since ‘they were suspicious of the prime of life of Demetrios and thought that the youth and incapacity of the boy (Antiochos V) who had succeeded to the kingship would serve their purpose better’.² A Machiavellian description of the Polybian senate. Presumably in early 160, however, Demetrios I was acknowledged by the elder Ti. Sempronius Gracchus.³ Nevertheless, Ti. Gracchus only accepted Demetrios I in his position after the senate had acknowledged Timarchos in Rome as king in Media, one of the Seleukid satrapies. Moreover, it was not only pretenders who were accepted by the Romans, as the people of Judaea allegedly made their first alliance with the Romans in this period.⁴ Therefore, it is possible that it was part of Roman politics to acknowledge individual power-holders within the Seleukid kingdom, and thus one could argue that Rome was not interested

¹ For an account highlighting the sheer number of embassies to Rome, e.g. Polybios’ books 30–31; Canali de Rossi 1997; Gruen 1984: 111–19.

² Pol. 31. 2. 7: . . . ὑπιδομένη τὴν ἀκμὴν τοῦ Δημητρίου, μᾶλλον δὲ κρίνασα συμφέρειν τοῖς σφετέροις πράγμασι τὴν νεότητα καὶ τὴν ἀδυναμίαν τοῦ παιδὸς τοῦ διαδεδεγμένου τὴν βασιλείαν.

³ Pol. 31. 33. 1–4. This has led scholars to believe that Demetrios I was not accepted as king in Rome: e.g. Ehling 2008: 140 (with further references). The acceptance of the golden crown, however, could be an indicator of his acceptance: Pol. 32. 2. 2–3.

⁴ 1 Makk. 8. 17–32; 12. 1–4; Jos. *Ant.* 12. 415–19 and 13. 164.

in a strong Seleukid kingdom.⁵ The fact that this process seems to have accelerated after Demetrios I's own vying for Roman acceptance is hardly accidental. It was perhaps the combination of a Seleukid king who sought an acceptance of his hasty withdrawal from Rome, and an increased perception of Roman power in the eastern Mediterranean, that triggered the interest of power-holders in Roman acceptance.

Seleukid pretenders, however, were not always accepted and thus senatorial politics, as suggested above, were not consistent. As outlined in chapter 3, it was presumably not long after his accession that Tryphon had sent a golden Nikē to Rome in order to be acknowledged as king. According to Diodoros' narrative, however, the senate refused to acknowledge him because he had murdered his ward. Diodoros' moralistic explanation is not sufficient: the murder of boy kings in the process of accession to the diadem was neither unique nor necessarily unacceptable.⁶ The reasons for Tryphon's non-acceptance should be located elsewhere. One could argue that Tryphon's position within the Levant was quite different from that of Timarchos and Alexander Balas.

Timarchos' power base was in Media, and it is likely that his sphere of action was initially the Seleukid east, far away from the eastern Mediterranean. Alexander Balas was accepted as a pretender to the Seleukid diadem, and although he was presumably old enough to lead an army, he had not yet proven himself as a successful military commander. Both usurpers were accepted by Rome, but it was far from clear if they would succeed in their attempts. Tryphon, however, had been a successful military commander who had styled Antiochos VI a counter-king to Demetrios II, and fought his wars until the boy king died. He also had been able to make an initial alliance with the people of Judaea, and managed to capture Jonathan the high priest (regardless of his motives for the capture). An acknowledgement by Rome could have led to a potential shift in power, giving Tryphon's reign more stability than the senate of Rome felt comfortable with. But who, in the end, was the senate?

So far, the description of senatorial politics has been largely artificial, following the language of interstate relations, and of our main authors: the senate enacted decrees, such as 'to Timarchos, because of . . . to be their king' (Diod. Sic. 31. 27a); the senate 'decided' *ἐδοξεν* (Pol. 33. 18. 13). This language, of course, ignores the fact that the senate was not unanimous in its political interests or decisions.⁷ For example, Polybios clearly illustrates in

⁵ See also Ehling 2008: 281–2; *contra* Gruen 1976: 84–7.

⁶ Diod. 33. 28a. On Antiochos IV's acceptance: Liv. 42. 6. 10–12; acceptance of Demetrios I: Pol. 31. 33. 1–4. See also ch. 3.1a.

⁷ This can only be a sketch of senatorial politics in this period and should be an object of further study.

his account that the interests of M. Porcius Cato and the Scipiones were very different, and the trial of the Scipiones after the war against Antiochos III is only one indicator of their senatorial competition.⁸ Different senators not only had different opinions with regard to the Hellenistic East; with its annual elections, the political environment of the senate itself also changed every year. Some senators explicitly exploited their knowledge of the Hellenistic East in the senatorial *agôn* in Rome. A prime 'Eastern Expert' in the late third century was Ti. Quinctius Flamininus. He knew how to use his position as victor of Kynoskephalai and as 'liberator of Greece' to establish his position within the Roman eastern enterprise and also in Rome.⁹ U. Gotter has convincingly demonstrated how the prestige of eastern campaigns could be translated effectively for internal Roman politics. The most well-known expert would receive embassies from the east that brought prestige, an influx in wealth (in the form of presents), as well as a self-fulfilling acknowledgement that the recipient of eastern embassies was an expert in this sphere. Following Gotter, the political value of Greek was translated into *auctoritas* in the inner senatorial discourse of the second and first centuries, and it allowed Roman senators to obtain a more influential position among their peers.¹⁰

Throughout the second and first centuries, good relations between the Hellenistic kings and individual Roman senators as well as their families continued. It was presumably the good relationship between the elder Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus and the Hellenistic kings that was the reason why the Attalid ambassador Eudemos visited his son Tiberius in 133 during his embassy to Rome to open the will and testament of Attalos III (Plut. *Ti. Gracc.* 14. 1–3).¹¹ Scipio Aemilianus, as the executor of Massinissa's will, is one example that illustrates that senators also could benefit from other rulers,¹² and Cicero's first-century description of the arrival of the future

⁸ See e.g. Pol. 23. 14. 1–11; Liv. 38. 50. 1–53. 11; Gell. NA 4. 18 and 6. 19.

⁹ For Flamininus' Greek *persona* in Greece: Plut. *Flam.* 10–12. For its value in Rome: Flaminus had set up a statue with a Greek inscription on the forum, Plut. *Flam.* 1.1. He was again sent to the East (although only as a legate) with M'. Acilius Glabrio because of his popularity with the Greeks, Plut. *Flam.* 15. For Eastern Experts: Gruen 1984: 203–49. Gotter has illustrated that individual senators were indeed regarded as 'experts' both by the Greeks and their Roman colleagues. For this reason they were not granted consecutive commands in similar regions: Gotter 2001: ch. 6.1; cf. Bernhardt 1998: 79–89.

¹⁰ Scipio: L. Cornelius Scipio Asiaticus showed his guests precious silver work (Plin. *HN.* 37.12), brought Greek artists to Rome (Liv. 39. 22. 10), and a statue of him wore the Greek *chlamys* and sandals (Cic. *Rab. post.* 27; Val. Max. 3. 6. 2). For an analysis: Gotter 2001: ch. 6.

¹¹ For the relationship between Ti. Sempronius Gracchus and other kings: e.g. Pol. 30. 27; 30. 30. 7; 31. 32.1–33. 5. See Knepppe 1989: 40; Badian 1958: 160–2; Rawson 1975: 150–2.

¹² Liv. *per.* 50; App. *Pun.* 105–6 (497–502); Zon. 9.27.

Ariarathes X underlines the eastern wealth and the lucrative aspects of friendships with eastern monarchs.¹³ Eastern embassies were valued by their Roman patrons for their precious gifts and for the impact these embassies could have on individual senator's positions among their senatorial peers.

This sketch of senatorial interests is brief, but it is perhaps in this context of individual senators' politics that we should place the acknowledgement of the Seleukid usurpers. Diodoros writes that Herakleides and Timarchos had been in Rome on a number of embassies for their king, Antiochos IV, and in his account of Timarchos in particular, Diodoros describes the usurper's relationship with Roman senators in the following terms: Timarchos 'provided himself with large sums of money, and he offered the senators bribes; seeking especially to overwhelm and lure with gifts any senators who were in a weak financial position'.¹⁴ The narrative stresses how Timarchos had in the past been able to gain influence over Roman decision-making by the means of bribery. It is certain that the envoys of Antiochos IV, on their mission to Rome, would have brought gifts for Roman senators, who were regarded as their 'Eastern Experts', and who would introduce them to the senate. The mention of the bribes, such as the corn contribution from Sicily for the younger C. Quinctius Flaminius, or the appearance of African beasts in Rome, only seems to be a clad in a loaded register, a topical description of what could otherwise be understood as lavish—and traditional—gifts that external clients brought to their Roman patrons.¹⁵

It is impossible to say which families Timarchos and Herakleides communicated with on their embassy, and it is equally impossible to guess which families had vested interests in the eastern affairs of Timarchos. At that time Ti. Sempronius Gracchus was surely one of the most distinguished senators in eastern affairs. He had already led the senatorial commission to investigate the state of affairs in the kingdom of Antiochos IV after Eleusis (Pol. 30. 27. 1–4), and was head of a commission in 161/0, as mentioned above (Pol. 31. 32.1–33. 5).¹⁶ Ti. Sempronius Gracchus would be a natural audience for the usurpers' embassies, but this is ultimately speculative. Nevertheless, even if Timarchos' quick demise presumably did not enable the Roman senators who supported his kingship to gain political profit within the Roman arena, this episode did not challenge the acceptance of usurpers in general. Roughly seven years later Alexander Balas was accepted in Rome, while Tryphon was

¹³ Cic. *ad Att.* 13. 2a; cf. *ad Att.* 5. 20. 6; and *ad fam.* 15. 2.

¹⁴ Diod. Sic. 31. 27a: . . . χρημάτων γὰρ πλῆθος κομίζων ἐδωροδοκεῖ τοὺς συγκλητικούς, καὶ μάλιστα τοὺς τοῖς βίοις ἀσθενεῖς ὑπερβαλλόμενος ταῖς δόσεσιν ἐδελέαζεν.

¹⁵ Flaminius: Liv. 33. 42. 8. Beasts: Liv. 44. 18. 8. Antiochos VII also sent magnificent gifts (*amplissima munera*) to Scipio Aemilianus, who entered them into the official accounts, which Livy notes was not customary: Liv. *per.* 57.

¹⁶ See Walbank, *HCP* III: 516–17.

not. Again, we should presumably credit the influence of Herakleides and his familiarity with Roman matters (and presumably individual senators) with Alexander Balas' success, while it is possible that Tryphon's lack of friends in Rome resulted in the usurper's non-acceptance. That senators had lost their interest in the Seleukid empire by the time of Tryphon's reign is explicitly contradicted by the evidence. Even after the death of Ti. Gracchus, we have explicit reference to senatorial interest in the eastern Mediterranean: perhaps in the late 140s, Scipio Aemilianus himself led an embassy to the Hellenistic East (Diod. Sic. 33. 28b).¹⁷

This model of senatorial competition is centred on an inner Roman discourse, a discourse of power, where kings could be useful, but partially detached from the political considerations of the Hellenistic East. Within Rome, it was primarily Roman politics that mattered, and we should therefore locate the acceptance of usurpers also within this political environment. As stated in chapter 3.2f, the 'Roman senate' was not interested in a strong Seleukid kingdom,¹⁸ which is illustrated by the fact that the senate accepted two usurpers. Although the acknowledgement did not include physical support,¹⁹ the senate nevertheless recognized local power-holders as political entities, thus interfering in the politics of the Seleukid kingdom, and encouraging a Seleukid empire that was occupied with its own affairs. More importantly, however, it is questionable whether we should credit 'the senate' with a distinct long-term foreign policy. Yes, a strong king in the Levant seems to have been generally undesirable, and internal wars prevented the kings from engaging with Ptolemaic Egypt, as under Antiochos IV and Demetrios I, or in other spheres of Roman interest, such as under Seleukos IV and Demetrios I. But the ways and means of how some actors from the East received an acknowledgment from the Roman senate may rather be based on the eastern agents' relationship with Roman senators and individual senator's interests.

While it is arguably individual senatorial interests that can explain 'Roman' political attitudes towards the Hellenistic east, these intricacies of Roman politics translated into blank acceptances of the kings-to-be by the Roman senate. While there is no evidence that Roman acceptance had any positive effect on the communication between the Seleukid usurpers and their troops, the people in their sphere of interest, or even other monarchs, for Timarchos, Alexander Balas, and Tryphon it appears to have been desirable to follow the embassies of Prousius of Bithynia, the Attalids, and also their Seleukid opponents to receive acceptance, and perhaps even *amicitia*. The

¹⁷ See Mattingly 1996; Mattingly 1986; see also Astin 1959: 221–7 who prefers the later date c.140/39. Cf. Pol. frg. 76.

¹⁸ As argued for by Gruen 1976: 84–7; reassessed by Ehling 2008: 281–2.

¹⁹ Gruen 1976: 84–7 and 94.

discourse of Roman power was explicitly evoked by some of these kings,²⁰ and it was this reference to a distant power that made acknowledgement by the senate of Rome valuable in itself.

²⁰ For the Attalids' stress on their authority granted by Rome, see the inscription from Toriaion: *SEG* 47: 1745 (*ed. pr.* Jonnes and Riel 1997: 3) with Thonemann 2013.

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